All-Women Road Trips: Sorry, No Men Allowed

A Vegan Eatery Even Carnivores Can Enjoy

The Ultimate Hike for Burning off the Eggnog

ARIZONA HIGHWAYS

ESCAPE·EXPLORE·EXPERIENCE

JANUARY 2009

WEEKEND GETAWAYS

25 Great Ways to Explore the State

Plus:

Meet Bill Brooks: John Wayne's Pilot — and So Much More

And:

Why a Prescott Woman Is Climbing Kilimanjaro

The Historic Arrest of John Dillinger

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TALK TO US: As you can tell by our cover, this month's issue features 25 of the state's best weekend getaways. Some you've heard of; others, probably not. No doubt you have some favorites of your own, and we'd love to hear about them. When you get a chance, send an e-mail to editor@arizonahighways.com.

GET MORE ONLINE:

- Learn about the best desert hikes in our extensive "Hiking Guide."
- Get details on some of this month's biggest events, including the Fiesta Bowl Parade and the Smithsonian Photo Exhibit, in our "Events Calendar."
- Find out where Arizona's celebrities like to hang out in the Grand Canyon State.

Monument Valley

Looking more like Everest, the San Francisco Peaks are a skier's dream in January. PHOTOGRAPH BY MARC MUENCH

FRONT COVER: Desert View Watchtower, designed by Mary Colter, sits on the Grand Canyon's South Rim. PHOTOGRAPH BY GEORGE STOCKING

BACK COVER: Desert Botanical Garden showcases arid plants from around the world, including this aloe, a native of Africa famous for the balm in its leaves. PHOTOGRAPH BY KEN AKERS

editor's LETTER

rstieve@arizonahighways.com

Cape Breton is an island off the north coast of Nova Scotia. It's one of the most beautiful places in the world, and it's about as far away from Arizona as you can get without leaving North America. Just off the coast of this scenic island is another scenic island. It's a lot smaller, but it's vast in terms of its cultural significance. It's also a point of contention, at least among the locals.

The rub is that the island is owned by a guy from Phoenix. The natives aren't crazy about that, and they're not shy about saying so, which is unusual. If you've ever met a Canadian, you know it takes a lot to get them riled up. This is the same country, after all, that gave us Gordon Lightfoot, Tommy Chong and *Strange Brew*. That said, the idea of an American owning a piece of Nova Scotia's sacred land is a real bugger. And we know how it feels.

Back in the 1800s, Walter Vail — *a Nova Scotian* — owned more than a million acres in Southern Arizona. The Empire Ranch, as it was known, was quite a spread, regardless of the flag at the top of the pole. The ranch was sold in 1928, and eventually ended up in the hands of the federal government, which declared it a national conservation area. Since then, the Empire Ranch Foundation has worked to preserve the ranch house and other buildings as a way of educating visitors about the difficulties of frontier life. If you haven't explored this home on the range, it's definitely worth the drive, and so is everything else in this month's cover story.

In all, we feature 25 of the state's best weekend getaways. Among them are road trips to Desert View Watchtower at the Grand Canyon, the Butterfly Lodge Museum in Greer and Kitt Peak Observatory, which is ideal for curious 5-year-olds intrigued by full moons, falling stars and far-off galaxies. All of these getaways, by the way, are rated G. If you prefer a PG-13 road trip, there's Sisters on the Fly. As the name implies, the club is for women only, and membership requires a cooler full of estrogen.

Sisters on the Fly was started by two sisters from Phoenix, and over the years it's become an all-women traveling brigade with more than 1,000 adopted "sisters," most of whom tow their own Airstreams, Fireballs, et al. — classic trailers dating back to the 1950s. Despite the inherent gender restriction, the women don't have anything against men, per se; they'd just rather hit the road without them, and they do so on a regular basis. On a recent trip to Monument Valley, they let one of our writers tag along.

In *Girls Club*, JoBeth Jamison tells the story of the sisters and shares her own experience, which included a sacred blessing led by Susie Yazzie, the "Grandmother of Monument Valley." It was a rare opportunity with an amicable mingling of cultures. It was something special. Unfortunately, that's not always the case in some parts of the Southwest.

As Larry Cheek writes in *Battle Ground*, Arizona is home to "a spreading series of knotty conflicts between off-reservation sacred lands and the uses that 21st century America has in mind for these same places — roads, resource extraction, recreation and even scientific research." *The New York Times* calls it "a new kind of Indian war," with Arizona sitting at ground zero.

Although casino revenues are giving many tribes the resources to hire lawyers and pursue legal action, there aren't any easy solutions. As you'll see, growth and religion are a complicated mix in the West — far more complicated than sharing a fence line with a Canadian land baron blaring Gordon Lightfoot music.

Shameless Self-Promotion

In case you hadn't heard, *Arizona Highways* recently won 11 international magazine awards for writing, photography and design — the awards were given by the International Regional Magazine Association. In addition, our sisters at *Arizona Highways Television* recently added yet another Emmy to their growing collection. Hats off to everyone involved; you've made us all extremely proud.

ROBERT STIEVE, *editor*

If you like what you see in this magazine every month, check out *Arizona Highways Television*, an Emmy Award-winning program hosted by former news anchor Robin Sewell. Now in its fifth season, the show does with audio and video what we do with ink and paper — it showcases the people, places and things of the Grand Canyon State, from the spectacular landscapes and colorful history to the fascinating culture and endless adventure. And that's just the beginning. "For me, the show is about more than just the destinations," Robin says. "It's about the people behind the scenes. It's their stories that make the destinations so interesting." Indeed, there's a reason this show wins so many awards — it's second-to-none, and we're proud to have our name on it. Take a look. For broadcast times, visit our Web site, arizonahighways.com, and click the *Arizona Highways Television* link on our homepage.

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contrib-utors

LAWRENCE W. CHEEK
Writer Larry Cheek holds many things sacred. Nature in particular. "In nature, all living things and all landscapes are interdependent and thus equal in value — and equally sacred, in my sight," he says. It's a concept he explores in *Battle Ground* (page 34), his wonderful essay about the conflicts brewing over some of Arizona's sacred native lands. A former Tucson resident, Cheek has been contributing to *Arizona Highways* since 1984. Today, he lives on Whidbey Island, Washington, where, he says, the daytime highs rarely exceed 80 degrees.

JOBETH JAMISON
JoBeth Jamison responded quickly to an invitation to join Sisters on the Fly for an all-women adventure (see *Girls Club*, page 46). And after living in a vintage Airstream and exploring Monument Valley with the cowgirl caravan, Jamison came up with a few ideas of her own for a cowgirls-only road trip. "I'd say the sisters pretty much have it dialed in," she says. "But cooking school in Tuscany would also rock." Jamison is a former associate editor of *Arizona Highways* and the current editor of *Sedona Magazine*. Her work has also appeared in *Fodor's Arizona* travel guides, *Billboard* magazine and *The Arizona Republic*.

BRUCE D. TAUBERT
Photographer Bruce Taubert began taking wildlife photographs 30 years ago, but only got serious, he says, in 2000. "If any species of wildlife stays still long enough to have its photo taken, I'm interested," Taubert says. "I enjoy photographing all wildlife, but if I had to pick a favorite, it would be taking high-speed flash photos of flying hummingbirds and flying bats. I love the challenge." To that end, Taubert faced plenty of challenges while photographing the Bullock's oriole for *Birds of a Feather?* (page 11), including picking just the right spot where the birds might be feasting on flowers in just the right season. It was a waiting game, but one that Taubert eventually won. In addition to *Arizona Highways*, Taubert's work has appeared in *Arizona Wildlife Views*, *Birders World* magazine, *WildBird* magazine and *Conservation International* magazine.

letters

PICTURE PERFECT

I was surprised to learn that *Arizona Highways* had never done a special "photography issue" [September 2008]. Although I enjoy the history stories and the hiking features, it's the photography that catches my eye every month. I've never seen anything quite like the work of Joel Grimes [*Black & White and Shot All Over*]. It's something special.

MICHAEL BERRY, DALLAS

TRASH TALK

Just couldn't believe the comment you made in your *Editor's Letter* [August 2008] regarding the trashing of our outdoors, specifically, "It's not our place to judge." I believe *Arizona Highways* does share some responsibility for this trashing. The magazine's original mission was to promote automobile travel throughout Arizona, but for too many years now, it's become more like a hiking magazine. By leading people to these areas with your wonderful articles and maps, you *do* share a responsibility for this trashing. Don't wash your hands of this mess and have a once-only article about the trashing. You should focus more articles and include a reminder in every article about keeping our outdoors clean. I'd bet that only a small portion of the population here even knew about Fossil Creek or anyplace else other than the Grand Canyon or Sedona perhaps, until *Arizona Highways* wrote about it. Please remember you are guiding people, most of whom have no roots in Arizona, to these wonderful places. Other than that, keep up the good work.

PHIL BERNACKE, QUEEN VALLEY

As a longtime subscriber, I wish to congratulate you on your recent article, *Endangered Arizona* [August 2008]. It's a long-established fact that many of our state parks and natural areas are under severe stress and that the legacy that we all wish to pass on to our children is at risk. Unfortunately, our political leaders regularly reduce the budget for our state parks, failing to recognize that modest investments would not only protect these irreplaceable areas, but also draw more visitors to our state and pay for themselves along the way. Courage is something that we rarely see in publications under the wing of the state administration, and you are to be commended.

BRENT W. BITZ, SEDONA

KIWIS AND OTHER BIRDS

A good friend, who grew up in Arizona, has shouted us a regular subscription to *Arizona Highways*. What a brilliant gift. Thanks to your magazine, we've been captivated by the awesome landscapes, especially the Grand Canyon; surprised by oases of verdant green and sparkling water; entranced by legends of the earliest inhabitants; and gripped by tales of derring-do and high adventure. Plus, we've enjoyed looking at some quirky but scary-looking wildlife that we don't get here in New Zealand. We don't have eagles, bears or snakes, though we do have kiwis and other unique birds. We've got some wonderful scenery, too, but Arizona looks very different. I haven't visited yet (my wife has), but I'd love to sometime. As a professional journalist and photographer, I can truly say *Arizona Highways* is inspirational.

DAVID J. KILLICK, CHRISTCHURCH, NEW ZEALAND

TREE LINES

I was disappointed to read in *Dressed in White* [July 2008] that *Arizona Highways* believes there is not a threat

of aspen extinction. In reality, aspens have been in serious decline throughout the Southwest for decades. In response to your claim that "the only natural force that appears to limit the amount of growth of aspens is the appearance of pocket gophers," you could also add browsing by large ungulates, namely elk, and drought to the list of factors causing this serious decline. Aspen decline is an important issue, one we should be working to increase public awareness about.

MEGAN KERNAN, FLAGSTAFF

EDITOR'S NOTE: Thanks for the feedback, Megan. Our position is that the root systems, not the trees themselves, are equipped for survival. We concur with you on the effects of prolonged drought and voracious ungulates.

contact us

If you have thoughts or comments about anything in *Arizona Highways*, we'd love to hear from you. We can be reached at editor@arizonahighways.com, or by mail at 2039 W. Lewis Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85009. For more information, visit arizonahighways.com.

ANDREW BURR

On the Ropes

Whether you're a spectator or a hands-on participant, rock climbing is unlike anything you'll ever see or do. In Sedona, one of the best places to catch the action is "The Mace," which features body-swallowing chimneys, spacious belays, a final summit step-across and big air. The spires are accessed from the Cathedral Rock Trail. *Information: Coconino National Forest, 928-282-4119 or www.fs.fed.us/r3/coconino.*

RICK GIASE

Up to the Challenge

Leah Hickman is headed to Africa. No, it's not a safari. She's going over to climb three of the highest peaks on the continent, and raise some money for charity in the process.

By LEAH DURAN

IF IT WERE UP to Leah Hickman, she'd spend every day doing what she loves most: hiking. For the Prescott native, there's nowhere she'd rather be. This month, she'll be doing her thing overseas, when she joins an international team of 13 other women — one of whom is an Arizona native — attempting to climb three of Africa's highest mountains in three weeks. They're not just peak-bagging, though. They're climbing for charity.

PRESCOTT

As part of the 3 Peaks 3 Weeks Challenge, Hickman, 23, will try to summit Mount Kilimanjaro (19,333 feet), the tallest freestanding mountain in the world; Mount Kenya (17,058 feet), Africa's second-highest peak; and Mount Meru, which rises nearly 15,000 feet. The goal is to heighten awareness about three key issues affecting the African continent: environment, education and health.

"The climbs are sort of the cherry on the top," says Hickman, whose first backpacking trip was to the Havasupai Reservation in the Grand Canyon at age 8. "Anybody can climb mountains, but with this, you're spending an entire year getting funds together."

In all, she pledged to raise a minimum of $10,000, but says she hopes to at least double that amount. In 2007, the inaugural team, which also included a member from Arizona, raised more than $350,000.

"I'm pretty uncomfortable asking people for money," she says. "Having grown up in Arizona, with the backcountry literally being my back door, the climbing is much less challenging."

Hickman, who spent her childhood exploring Arizona's mountains and canyons, including the Mogollon Rim and the Chiricahua Mountains, studied environmental science at Mesa State College in Colorado. During summer breaks, she'd return to Arizona to fight wildfires as part of Prescott's Granite Mountain Hotshots trainee crew.

Last summer, in addition to fundraising, she spent some time training in the San Francisco Peaks near Flagstaff. "It's the closest thing to climbing the peaks in Africa," Hickman says. "The Grand Canyon is also a fantastic way to prepare, because there's so much elevation change."

Her new home state of Colorado offers some great training options as well. "I imagine I'll be ready when I can hike up several 14,000-footers in a weekend and come down and not be sick," Hickman says.

None of this is considered a hardship. "I'm happiest when I'm out doing things like hiking," she says. "It's not only training, it's a kind of soul food."

When Hickman travels to Africa this month, she'll spend some time between the hikes visiting the nonprofit organizations in Kenya and Tanzania to which she donated.

"It's really important to the team, because we get to see firsthand where the money is going," she says. "It's certainly a challenge, but it's fantastic. I'm so grateful to be a part of it."

For more information, or to make a donation, visit 3peaks3weeks.org.

PRATT'S Q&A

PAUL MARKOW

Tony Mandarich
Photographer and former NFL player

If you were trying to convince friends in your native Canada that Arizona is one of the most beautiful places in America, where would you take them?
I'd definitely take them to Sedona. And I have.

What's your favorite place to photograph in Arizona?
I have three: Sedona, Oak Creek and Monument Valley.

If you were making a road trip to the Grand Canyon, which would you choose: Harley or vintage muscle car?
Vintage muscle car. Maybe a '67 Chevelle or a '68 Dodge Dart.

Best place in the state to grab a bite to eat?
I love the Javelina Café in Sedona.

Where's the best place to watch a football game in Arizona?
Well, University of Phoenix Stadium in Glendale is unreal — absolutely awesome — but there's no place like home.

— Dave Pratt is the host of the "Dave Pratt in the Morning" show on KMLE 107.9 FM in Phoenix.

A Different Animal

Vegetarian restaurants tend to scare carnivores, but not Lovin' Spoonfuls in Tucson, which is attracting beefeaters and tree-huggers alike.

By ROBERT STIEVE

Robert Oppenheimer never opened a steakhouse. That's not unusual — scientists typically stick with science, or maybe take up fly-fishing, but they don't open restaurants. Peggy Raisglid is the exception. After working for 13 years as a chemist for Mobil Oil, she finally took the advice of friends who would come up to her after dinner parties and say things like: "Peg, your casserole was so good I licked my plate. And then I licked the plate of the woman sitting next to me. She looked at me a little funny, but I didn't care. It was incredible. You really ought to open a restaurant." And so she did.

Like Peggy, Lovin' Spoonfuls is unique, especially in a state like Arizona, which is known more for red meat and potatoes than "burgers" made of adzuki beans, zucchini, mushrooms, carrots, corn, organic oats and walnuts. Not only is her restaurant vegetarian, but it's also vegan, which means there isn't an animal or animal byproduct in sight — no eggs, no milk, no cheese, no nothing.

To an unwavering carnivore, that might sound like a recipe for disaster, but even beefeaters are embracing this popular Tucson restaurant. That's because the menu goes beyond the stereotypical list of vegetarian options — things made of seeds, twigs and pinecones. Here, everything is fresh, flavorful and filling, another stereotypical knock on vegetarian cuisine.

Of course, there are a few things on the menu that require an open mind, such as the Deluxe BLT, which is made of soy bacon strips, fresh lettuce, tomatoes and vegan mayo; the Asian Pepper Steak, which features stir-fried vegan beef with peppers and onions; and the Golden Nuggets, an appetizer of battered soy chicken served with various vegan dipping sauces.

Lovin' Spoonfuls is located at 2990 N. Campbell Avenue in Tucson. For more information, call 520-325-7766 or visit lovinspoonfuls.com.

If you're feeling a little adventurous, you won't find a more palatable vegetarian menu. If you're more concerned with filling an open stomach than an open mind, there are plenty of safe options, as well, including soups, salads, burritos, pastas and some of the best french fries you'll ever eat. Because they're made with 100 percent canola oil in a fryer that's free of fish sticks and chunks of calamari, the natural flavor of the potato is deliciously tangible. Equally impressive is Peggy's Cashew-Mushroom Pâté, which was named one of the six best vegetarian dishes in the country by the readers of *Vegetarian Times* magazine.

TUCSON

In addition to the entrees and appetizers, the atmosphere at Lovin' Spoonfuls exudes a kind of healthiness. It's not hippie, like something you'd find in Flagstaff. It's minimalist and clean. Spotless. Kind of like a chemistry lab, but instead of petri dishes and test tubes there are sandwich baskets and dinner plates. What else would you expect from a scientist-turned-restaurateur?

EDWARD McCAIN

Private Quarters

There are a lot of things to like about RedBuck Ranch in Scottsdale: the food, the atmosphere, the hospitality. Even better, it's limited to one set of guests at a time. Talk about privacy.

By LAUREN PROPER

SCOTTSDALE

AFTER BILLIE "THE KID" SHEPHERD had her first country dance with Johnny "Wild" West, she couldn't get the bearded cowboy out of her head. He told the enthusiastic city woman about himself and also about two horses, Red and Buck — "an aging sorrel" and "a beautiful buckskin with tiger eyes," according to Shepherd's essay, "The Story of RedBuck Ranch."

Shepherd, who grew up in England on military bases with her family, first learned about Arizona in 1960 from a copy of *Arizona Highways*. Although it arrived with stacks of other mail, the magazine stood out, and after thumbing through it, Shepherd's father decided to move to Arizona when he retired.

West's story was a little different. He grew up in Chandler on a dairy farm, and his dancing skills were almost legendary — he was once Arizona's *Dance Fever* winner.

A year after their first dance, Billie and Johnny were sleeping in a horse trailer while they built the ranch of their dreams. Then, they decided to share that dream with others.

Although they wanted their guests to get the same awe-inspiring feelings they do from the beautiful property, they wanted to keep it intimate. So, the Hideout is open to only one couple at a time. It's a place where people can experience Arizona in a very private way. And there's something for everyone, from golfers to honeymooners to locals looking for a weekend getaway.

"Guests can do as much or as little as they want," Shepherd says, adding that they'll arrange for just about anything a guest could possibly think of. "As long as it's legal, we'll do it."

Some of the common activities include horseback riding, Jeep tours, hiking, golfing, bird-watching and day trips around the Valley of the Sun. For those who prefer to stay on the ranch, there's plenty to do. Or not do.

There's a golf challenge with three sand traps, and a beautiful pool and spa with a Western-style cabana nicknamed "The Relaxation Station." Then, of course, there's the appropriately named Hideout. Shepherd says many guests who visit RedBuck never leave the property, choosing instead to enjoy the Hideout's private patio with fireplace, full kitchen, flat-screen TV and bathroom. Seriously, the bathroom. It's something special, thanks to a massive window next to the red tub that provides for romantic baths with mountain views as far as the eye can see.

Guests can choose from four different packages during their stay, each of which includes one big ol' country breakfast on a day of the guests' choosing. Like Shepherd and West, the Hideout at RedBuck Ranch is a kind of convergence. A place where the mountains meet the sky, where the Wild West meets contemporary high-class desert living. Best of all, there's the serenity of getting away from it all without leaving the city limits.

RedBuck Ranch is located at 30212 N. 154th Street in Scottsdale. For more information, call 480-471-0011 or visit redbuckranch.com.

Night Shift

Frank Zullo is a very talented photographer. You might not know his name, but once you've seen his astrophotography, you'll never look at the night skies the same way again.

Interviewed by JEFF KIDA, photo editor

AH: How did you get interested in photography?

FRANK ZULLO: I remember selling packets of American Seeds door-to-door when I was growing up in New Jersey. It was the early '60s, and I sold enough seeds to choose a Brownie box camera from a list of prizes. I used it to take pictures of family and friends, like most people, but I also found myself experimenting a bit. I remember one time my brother and I set up his model cars and I tried to photograph them close-up and at low angles to make them seem full scale. I really liked to experiment with it. We later moved to Tucson, and my parents let me use one of the bathrooms as a darkroom when I was in high school. At that time I discovered the photography in *Arizona Highways* and wondered, "How could I do that?"

Did you contact the magazine?

No, I joined the Air Force and was trained in documentary filmmaking. When I got out, I did some television work, but realized it wasn't what I was looking for; I really missed still photography. So, I went back to Arizona State University and studied visual communications design. From there I did commercial work in Phoenix, especially golf course photography.

How did you go from golf courses to constellations?

By then it was the early '80s, and I began reading about the return of Halley's comet, the peak of which was supposed to happen in the spring of 1986. I was captivated by the night sky from an early age, and had tried shooting astronomical subjects before this with mixed results. So I decided to make the event the focal point of my photography and finally learn the secrets of capturing the stars on film. I did some research and built a hand-cranked sky-tracking device that would allow me to make successful photos of the comet.

Your efforts paid off, but unlike so many night-sky photos, most of yours use strong foregrounds as part of the composition.

I knew I wanted to have foregrounds in my photographs from the beginning, so I experimented with simple techniques to accomplish that. Early on, I used Kodalith film to shoot opaque or silhouetted landmarks with clear skies. Then I sandwiched the negatives and shot duplicates to make a single photo.

Because you create your final images using multiple photographs, how do you handle mixing stock foregrounds with different sky photos — in terms of orientation?

To be honest, in the early days, I was just trying to see what would work with different films and exposures. So I wasn't always as aware or careful about orienting specific landmarks with skies. What really opened my eyes was learning about the stars themselves and simultaneously becoming more confident with my photographic technique. When I started incorporating rock art into my foregrounds [see pages 34-36], I was amazed to see the number of references between sky and stone. At that point, accuracy became very important to me.

FRANK ZULLO

Is your career in photography what you expected?

When I think about my career, I can say this: I don't know exactly how I came to be where I am today, but I know it's where I'm supposed to be.

SHOOT THE MOON

A simple way to begin photographing night skyscapes is to experiment with the moon. Prime photographic opportunities occur daily at sunrise and sunset, and some of those opportunities are directly related to the phases of the moon. The moon, whether it's at its full, crescent or quarter-moon phase, can evoke a sense of romance, whimsy or mystery, adding a lot to an image. First, determine when the moon rises and sets each month — the information is easily found online. Next, choose an interesting foreground. Because the moon is the brightest object in the night sky, shoot several days before the full moon to maintain the detail in both the moon and the foreground of your image.

Photo Tips

DAVID MUENCH

EDITOR'S NOTE: Look for *Arizona Highways Photography Guide*, available at bookstores and arizonahighways.com.

ONLINE

For more photography tips and other information, visit arizonahighways.com and click on "Photo Tips."

Caught by Surprise

John Dillinger was a murdering bank robber who always managed to get away. That is, until he showed up in Tucson, 75 years ago this month.

By KENDALL WRIGHT

TUCSON

TURNS OUT, TUCSON IN January wasn't such a great idea for John Dillinger. The weather was nice, and the Hotel Congress offered first-rate accommodations, but it was the cops that ruined things. To the surprise of everyone, including Dillinger himself, the local police did what the FBI couldn't and captured the notorious gangster on January 25, 1934.

"Well I'll be damned!" Dillinger exclaimed, amazed that Tucson's bush-league police officers nabbed him without firing a single shot — something the combined forces of several states and the FBI had been trying to do for almost a year.

Seventy-five years later, the city still celebrates the historic moment during its annual Dillinger Days event, which features re-enactments of the arrest, live music, tours, lectures and an antique car show. This year's event takes place on January 24.

John Dillinger

Back in the '30s, things were less festive. It was the Great Depression, and Dillinger dominated the headlines for a series of bank robberies and murders across the United States. In a period of eight months, Dillinger and his gang had robbed more than five banks, plundered four police arsenals and ruthlessly murdered several people involved. What's more, he was frustrating law enforcement agencies along the way.

It was after a bank robbery in East Chicago, Indiana, during which an officer was killed, that Dillinger and his mob headed south to Tucson to hole up for a while.

They were staying on the third floor of the Hotel Congress, under aliases, when a fire broke out. After being told of the fire by the desk attendant working the switchboard, the gang fled down aerial ladders but forgot their luggage. With the encouragement of a $12 tip from the gangsters, a couple of firefighters retrieved the heavy bags, discovering afterward that they'd been packed with a small arsenal of weapons and $23,816 in cash.

A few days later, one of the same firemen recognized Dillinger's men in a story in *True Detective* magazine. A subsequent tip led to a stakeout at a house on North Second Avenue, where Dillinger was eventually captured. Although the arrest occurred without a bloody shootout, it put Tucson police in the history books as the law enforcement agency that finally captured Public Enemy No. 1.

For more information on Dillinger Days, call 520-622-8848, ext. 207 or visit visittucson.org.

50 years ago

IN ARIZONA HIGHWAYS

The January 1959 issue of *Arizona Highways* made a point. Pun intended. It featured "Cactusland, U.S.A.," with Arizona as its capital. Among other things, the issue included a colorful portfolio of cactus blooms and detailed illustrations of cactus spines, as well as a story about creosotes' curative powers. No prescription necessary.

This month in history

■ ON JANUARY 1, 1895, the Sisters of Mercy opened St. Joseph's Sanatorium, a 12-bed hospital in an adobe cottage located at Fourth and Polk streets in Phoenix. The nuns devoted their lives to caring for tuberculosis patients.

■ IN JANUARY 1890, two teachers from Tucson were reinstated after being discharged from their duties for enforcing corporal punishment.

■ ON JANUARY 8, 1774, Juan Bautista de Anza set out from Tubac on his first expedition to California, where he eventually located the sites for Presidio de San Francisco and Mission San Francisco de Asis.

■ IN JANUARY 1889, the Fifteenth Territorial Legislature met in Prescott and voted to move the capital to Phoenix. Then they promptly adjourned and reconvened in Phoenix.

■ IN JANUARY 1825, trapper James Ohio Pattie traveled along the San Francisco River in Eastern Arizona and, along with a companion, trapped 250 beavers in 14 days. Pattie is believed to be the first American citizen to travel in Arizona.

BRUCE D. TAUBERT

Birds of a Feather?

Baltimore orioles and Bullock's orioles have a lot in common. Don't lump them together, though. The American Ornithologists' Union tried that once in the '70s, and it wasn't pretty.

By KERIDWEN CORNELIUS

Rudyard Kipling once said, "East is East and West is West, and ne'er the twain shall meet." Tell that to the American Ornithologists' Union.

In 1973, the AOU rocked the avian world with the declaration that, since western Bullock's orioles (above) sometimes interbred with eastern Baltimore orioles (the birds, not the baseball players), they were actually one species. These scientists eliminated both names and dubbed them all northern orioles — a decision that simultaneously shortened birders' life lists by one, and left the Baltimore Orioles (the baseball players, not the birds) suddenly mascotless. And as everyone knows, you don't mess with birders or baseball fans.

The decision puzzled nonunion ornithologists, because the birds don't actually look alike. The Baltimore oriole (like the Scott's oriole, an Arizona resident) has a black head and mostly black wings, while the Bullock's has an orange face with ebony slashes across the eyes and partially whitewashed wings. The Bullock's is a westerner and the Baltimore an easterner; they only hybridize in the Great Plains, where their territories overlap.

Bullock's orioles are named after English naturalist William Bullock, who collected the bird while visiting his silver mine near Mexico City. The Bullock's is one of many neotropical birds that arrive in Arizona's riparian areas in spring to breed, then migrate to Mexico and Central America for the fall and winter.

In Arizona, Bullock's orioles congregate around the San Pedro River, the Huachuca Mountains, and in lakeshores and rivers in the north. They nest primarily in large trees like cottonwoods and willows, and feast on caterpillars, fruits, insects, spiders and nectar.

With their flashy colors, you'll have no trouble spotting Bullock's orioles. The male is distinguished by its tuxedo wings and mango belly, while the female has a modest gray body and a lemon face. In fact, the word oriole is related to its homophone aureole, both of which derive from the Latin *aureolus*, meaning "golden."

As for the northern oriole controversy, both birders and baseball fans were delighted in 1995 when the American Ornithologists' Union (persuaded by DNA evidence) decreed that the Baltimore and Bullock's were separate orioles. And ne'er the twain shall meet.

nature factoid

BRUCE D. TAUBERT

Desert Box Turtle

The desert box turtle is somewhat of a misnomer. That's because it has the foot and leg structure of a tortoise and prefers to live on dry ground. However, unlike tortoises, which are strictly herbivores, the box turtle is an omnivore — like its terrapin brethren, this slow-moving reptile will make a meal of insects and carrion.

—NIKKI KIMBEL

JEFF KIDA

Barrett-Jackson

JANUARY 11-18
SCOTTSDALE

Time again for the "World's Greatest Collector Car Event." Last year's auction drew more than 280,000 visitors who watched some of the world's most expensive vintage and collector automobiles go on the block during the weeklong auction. This year, high-rollers, celebrities and car buffs will get a chance to bid on more than 1,000 rare and unique vehicles (including the 1970 Plymouth Hemi Barracuda pictured above). Cooking demonstrations, fashion shows, wine tastings and gourmet food offerings are also included. *480-421-6694 or barrett-jackson.com.*

JACK DYKINGA

Smithsonian Photo Exhibit

JANUARY 10-MARCH 29 PHOENIX

This month, the Burton Barr Central Library in Phoenix presents *Lasting Light: 125 Years of Grand Canyon Photography*, the national debut of the Smithsonian Institution's touring photography exhibit. The show is free and features 60 photographs covering 125 years of history at the Canyon. Noted photographers include Jack Dykinga, George H.H. Huey, James Cowlin and Sue Bennett. *602-262-4636 or phoenixpubliclibrary.org.*

Photography Workshops

Springtime in Arizona offers great photographic opportunities. Travel to Tombstone to try your hand at portrait photography or create unique images of Arizona's ghost towns. If stunning landscapes interest you, our photo workshops will take you to places like Saguaro National Park and the Chiricahua Mountains. *888-790-7042 or friendsofazhighways.com.*

Gems & Minerals

JANUARY 1-31 QUARTZSITE

Gems, minerals, fossils, petrified wood, crystals, rough and cut stones, geodes, carvings, finished jewelry, lapidary supplies ... they're all available this month at one of the state's most popular gem and mineral gatherings. Also, on January 3, Quartzsite celebrates its most famous resident, camel driver Hadji Ali, during the town's annual Hi Jolly parade. *ci.quartzsite.az.us/shows.htm.*

Lettuce Days

JANUARY 24-25
YUMA

Yuma, which is known as the winter lettuce capital of the world, presents its 11th Annual Yuma Lettuce Days Festival. The festival takes place in historic downtown Yuma and offers the Southwest's "largest salad bar," farmers' markets, entertainment, food and vendor booths, fresh produce displays and a ceramic salad bowl exhibit. *928-782-5712 or yumalettucedays.com.*

Maynard Dixon

JANUARY 1-31 TUCSON

Tucson Museum of Art presents the work of Maynard Dixon, one of Arizona's most renowned artists. The exhibit, *A Place of Refuge: Maynard Dixon's Arizona*, features the painter's interpretations of local subjects, including 60 paintings and 50 drawings, some of which Dixon painted at his winter home in Tucson. *520-624-2333 or tucsonmuseumofart.org.*

Grand Canyon
PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFF KIDA

With gas prices where they are, traveling is more expensive than it was a year ago — we're not going to pretend otherwise. Still, a road trip in Arizona is a pretty good bargain, whether it's a visit to Desert View Watchtower at the South Rim, the Bluegrass on the Beach concert series in Lake Havasu City or the Butterfly Lodge Museum in Greer. What follows are 25 of the state's best weekend getaways. Some you can experience in a couple of hours, and others will take a day or two. Either way, there's something in here for everyone.

BY LAUREN PROPER

Weekend get aways

1 Grand Canyon Field Institute Classes

GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK

It's hard to argue there's a more beautiful classroom than the Grand Canyon, and the instructors at the Grand Canyon Field Institute have made the great gorge their primary subject. More than 200 classes each year focus on everything from learning about the Canyon's natural history to backcountry medicine. For many, the introductory backpacking class is the most appropriate. After hiking down Bright Angel Trail, students spend two nights at the Bright Angel Campground and explore places like the slot canyon carved by Phantom Creek, Indian Garden Campground and scenic Plateau Point. *Information: 928-638-2485 or grandcanyon.org.*

JONATHAN L. PEIFFER

3 Hopi Mesa Tours

HOPI NATION

According to the story of the Four Worlds, the Hopis were led into this world through a reed that took them to the Grand Canyon, their *sipapu*, or place of emergence. They were allowed to stay as long as they promised to take care of the land. Nearly 1,000 years later, they still inhabit the same area. This tale, along with several others, is part of Gary Tso's tour of the mesas of Hopiland. In addition to storytelling, Tso also introduces people to native artists, takes them through the village of Old Oraibi and shows them some of the more than 15,000 petroglyphs that still exist on the reservation. *Information: 928-734-2567 or e-mail Gary Tso at lhhunter58@hotmail.com.*

JACK DYKINGA

2 Butterfly Lodge Museum

GREER

When James Willard Schultz and his Native American wife came to this small Mormon town, no one could have expected how well the untraditional couple would fit in with their neighbors. With the help of a local family, Schultz and his son, Lone Wolf, built a cabin-turned-hunting-lodge in Greer in 1913. They named it *Apuni Oyis*, which means "butterfly lodge" in Blackfoot. Today, the lodge is a museum that honors the Schultzes and displays some of their original works — James was a writer, and Lone Wolf, or Hart Merriam, was an artist and sculptor. Once a year, Greer pays homage to James by performing a dramatization of his first novel, *My Life As an Indian*, at the town's community center. *Information: 928-735-7514 or www.wmonline.com/butterflylodge.htm.*

DAVID H. SMITH

Butterfly Lodge Museum

4 Desert View Watchtower

SOUTH RIM, GRAND CANYON

There aren't many buildings at the Grand Canyon that Mary Elizabeth Jane Colter didn't have a hand in designing. Her most physically prominent contribution is the Desert View Watchtower, the tallest building on the South Rim. Initially meant to be a rest stop and gift shop, Colter modeled the 70-foot tower after a prehistoric Indian structure. When it opened in 1933, the bottom floor operated as a souvenir shop for visitors with the upper levels serving as observation decks, which look out across the Grand Canyon to the Painted Desert and San Francisco Peaks. Inside, murals painted by Hopi artist Fred Kabotie depict various aspects of Indian life in the area, including images of Hopi mythology. *Information: 928-638-7888 or nps.gov/grca.*

5 Snowflake Historic Homes Tour

SNOWFLAKE

RICHARD WEBB

James Flake Pioneer home

Twenty-four. That's the number of children James Flake had; nine with his first wife and 15 with the next. He needed a big house — one with three stories and space on the roof for entertaining guests. Not too far away, former Mormon Church leader and Territorial legislator Jesse N. Smith and his five wives occupied another section of the same town. Each woman had her own house, although only one of the homes still remains. That structure, with separate rooms representing each of Smith's wives, is part of the Snowflake Historic Homes Tour. There are more than 100 historic buildings on the walking tour; eight are open to the public and serve as examples of early pioneer culture. *Information: 928-536-4881 or ci.snowflake.az.us.*

GRAND CANYON AUDIO RANGER

Personal tour guides are now available at the South Rim of the Grand Canyon. Sort of. Because only one in 1,000 visitors gets a chance to interact with a ranger, the Grand Canyon Association is now offering a professionally produced audio tour, which is available on reloadable MP3 players at GCA outlets throughout the park. "The easier you're able to get the information about a place you want, the more likely you are to connect to that place and really get the most out of it," says Helen Thompson, a spokesperson for the GCA. The tour covers everything from the park's geology and human history to wildlife and natural history, and it's presented by park rangers and locals. Thompson says the audio tour was made possible by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, and a partnership with Arizona State University and the GCA. For pre-trip planners, Thompson says downloadable files of the tour are available at the GCA Web site, where the information is transferrable to as many MP3 players and iPods as desired. The cost is $5.95. The other option is to buy the tour at the park. The kit, which includes an MP3 player, is $19.95. "This really isn't a moneymaker," Thompson says. "We just look at it as a way to connect visitors in as many ways as we can."

Information: grandcanyon.org.

— Kendall Wright

GEORGE RAYMOND

6 Chapel of the Holy Cross

SEDONA

Marguerite Brunswig Staude traveled all over Europe and the United States before finding the perfect place to build her dream church, and she couldn't have chosen a better spot. The Chapel of the Holy Cross sits atop the red rocks of Sedona with views that are tough to emulate. Even the structure itself is something of a miracle. Wedged between two rocks more than 200 feet above the ground, a large cross provides a stark contrast to the blue sky and the burnt sienna foundation. Marguerite's goal was to inspire people to worship without distraction, which explains the church's spartan interior. *Information: 928-282-4069 or chapeloftheholycross.com.*

7 Page Springs Wine Tour

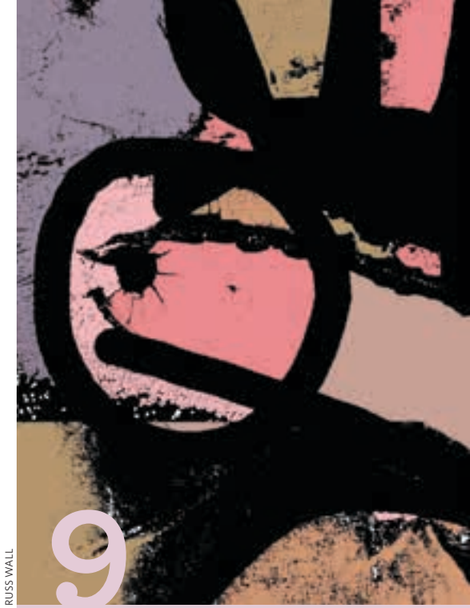
CORNVILLE

Even though the unincorporated town of Cornville isn't famous for corn, don't write it off — its vineyards and wineries have gained national attention. Grapes thrive in the area's moderate temperatures and volcanic soil, and while all three of the town's major vineyards offer a diversity of varietals, the Page Springs area is known for its Zinfandels and other red wines. Javelina Leap Vineyard & Winery won top honors at the 2007 Zinfandel Advocates and Producers Festival; Page Springs Vineyards & Cellars has been perfecting its Syrahs; and Oak Creek Vineyards and Winery continues to add to its wide variety. All three vineyards are located on Page Springs Road, and they're close enough to one another to walk if you overindulge during tastings. *Information: sedona-verdevalley.com.*

8 Fort Apache Historic Park

FORT APACHE INDIAN RESERVATION

The Apache Indians had a love-hate relationship with Arizona settlers. While some Apaches launched violent raids, many were peaceful. In 1870, one year after General E.O.C. Ord reported a friendly encounter between Captain John Berry and a group of Apaches at their White Mountain village, the U.S. government established a military post nearby. Initially called Camp Ord, its purpose was to quell attacks by rogue Apache leaders — notably Geronimo and Cochise. Camp Ord's name changed several times, and the camp finally became Fort Apache in 1879, nearly a decade after construction first began. After Geromino's surrender in 1886, peace was restored to the region. Today, visitors can tour the 288-acre area that includes the Fort Apache Cultural Center and Museum. *Information: 928-338-1230 or www.wmonline.com/attract/ftapache.htm.*



RUSS WALL

9 First Saturday Art Walk

JEROME

Imagine downtown Phoenix's First Fridays with fewer trendy teenagers, less walking and more variety. That's Jerome's monthly art festival. With more than 20 participating galleries and studios, Jerome's First Saturday Art Walk is one of the town's main attractions. Visitors can check out the largest collection of kaleidoscopes in the United States at Nellie Bly Gallery, then head over to the Old Jerome High School and walk through the 15 studios and galleries housed inside. Like First Fridays, Jerome's art walk features live music, food and wine. *Information: 928-649-2277 or jeromeartwalk.com.*

10 Black Rock Ranch

THATCHER

It's not a vacation until you learn how to lasso a steer and see a branding. That's the motto at Black Rock Ranch. This wilderness retreat has been family-owned since the 1890s, serving not only as a place to relax but also to get a taste of Old West history in the form of a working cattle ranch. Guests learn how to shoot a 12-gauge shotgun and cook a meal over a campfire with a Dutch oven. There are also horseshoes and hikes. Evenings, an open-air ramada provides the perfect place to stargaze by a fire before heading into your log cabin for the night. Keep in mind, the rough roads to the ranch require a high-clearance vehicle. *Information: 928-428-6481 or blackrockranch.com.*

11 Route 66 Museum

KINGMAN

Over the years, millions of people have gotten their kicks on Route 66 as they traveled through Arizona on what John Steinbeck called the "mother road." Kingman was one of many stops, but it wasn't just another roadside city. Kingman broke up the highway's longest uninterrupted stretch in Arizona, and was a welcome rest stop for weary travelers. Its importance died down when Interstate 40 bypassed Kingman completely in 1981. Luckily, the road's role in the city's past is kept alive at the Route 66 Museum, which features photos, old cars, murals and other memorabilia. Of course, you'll have to take a scenic drive down the road to get the full effect. *Information: 928-753-9889 or kingmantourism.org.*

KERRICK JAMES

12 Oatman Hotel

OATMAN

Years after being kidnapped by Indians and forced to work as a slave, Olive Oatman was released in 1856 at Fort Yuma. Although the town named for Olive may have gotten off to a rocky start, things got better. Clark Gable fell in love with the area and spent the first night of his honeymoon with Carole Lombard at the Oatman Hotel. Today, the hotel is one of many stops for history buffs and ghost hunters along Historic Route 66. You can't spend the night anymore, but the staff at the Oatman Hotel is happy to serve up an authentic buffalo burger and some homemade burro ears (don't worry, they're potato chips). Real burros, ears intact, panhandle outside on the street. Jerry Love, owner of Classy Ass Gifts, boasts that the town has "a whole lot of jackasses ... the four-legged kind." *Information: 928-768-4408 or 928-768-6222.*

KERRICK JAMES

13 Bluegrass on the Beach

LAKE HAVASU CITY

It's not Santa Monica, but Bluegrass on the Beach music festival has all the right elements — and it's seaweed-free. The three-day event (March 6-8) features award-winning bands from all over the country. This year, Dailey & Vincent, Cherryholmes and the United States Navy Band's "Country Current" are among the artists scheduled to perform. Everything you could need is provided for on site — including a shuttle bus, food, water and showers — which comes in handy for those who choose to camp out for the weekend. Single-day tickets are also available. Either way, you can expect some of the best bluegrass in the country and a beautiful backdrop to boot. *Information: 209-785-4693 or landspromotions.com.*

14 Yuma Quartermaster Depot State Historic Park

YUMA

It's hard to imagine Yuma as an important river port, but before the railroad came into the city in 1877, it was. Supplies from the U.S. Army's Quartermaster Depot were ferried across waterways or taken by mule to their destinations throughout the Southwest until Fort Lowell in Tucson took over operations in 1880. After sending most of the major equipment there, not much was left at Yuma, and the depot was closed a decade later. Fortunately, five of the original buildings still remain. There's a museum and gift shop, too, and a picnic area for visitors who take their own supplies in the form of a food-filled basket. *Information: 928-329-0471 or azstateparks.com/Parks/Yuqa.*

15 Cocopah Museum & Cultural Center

SOMERTON

The Kwapa tribe, known more commonly as the Cocopah, has lived along the Colorado River for as long as anyone can remember. It makes sense, considering Kwapa means "river people." Nobody is sure of the exact history of the tribe, however, because for centuries it had no written language — records were kept through the telling of stories. While some of their history can never be revived, the Cocopahs constructed a museum more than a decade ago. Part of the museum features life-size statues of Cocopah Indians, as well as other aspects of Cocopah life, including traditional clothing and musical instruments. Many of their customs are still carried on, like beading and doll making, and some arts and crafts are for sale at the museum's gift shop. *Information: 928-627-1992 or cocopah.com.*

16 West of Western Culinary Festival

PHOENIX

Normally, food and drinks aren't associated with the Phoenix Art Museum, which is home to hundreds of priceless works of art. However, the museum is hosting the 5th Annual West of Western Culinary Festival during the second weekend in March. The food stays outside, of course, but the Dorrance Sculpture Garden makes for an amazing restaurant. More than 50 chefs from some of Phoenix's best restaurants stop by, and their dishes go perfectly with the more than 100 wines and spirits that are also available. They call it "The Grand Tasting," and it's just that. Experts offer cooking classes, demos and wine tips throughout the day with live music in the background. *Information: 602-262-5652 or westofwestern.com.*

17 Kay El Bar Ranch

WICKENBURG

In 1925, a room at the Kay el Bar Ranch went for just $8 a night. Today, it'll run you a little more. What hasn't changed is its status as an official Arizona dude ranch, complete with a game of horseshoes and cowboy poetry readings at night. Every day except Sundays and holidays, the main activities center on horseback riding, whether it's learning how to ride or enjoying the trails on the property. There are horses for people of all skill levels, lessons for first-timers and even a chance at cattle sorting. When guests aren't out and about, there's plenty to do back at the ranch, including birdwatching — more than 150 different species of birds have been identified in the area. *Information: 928-684-7593 or kayelbar.com.*

KERRICK JAMES

18 Cactus League Spring Training

METROPOLITAN PHOENIX & TUCSON

As you probably know, the boys of summer spend their spring in Arizona. In all, the state hosts 14 teams. The first games came to town in 1946 after racial tensions in Florida forced Cleveland Indians player Larry Doby, the American League's first black player, to sleep in a separate hotel room. Indians owner Bill Veeck vowed to move his team to Tucson if Horace Stoneham, then owner of the New York Giants, promised to go to Phoenix. Both came, and you can't blame them. There aren't many other places in the country that average more than 300 days of sun each year. So, instead of taking a sweater and umbrella, baseball fans at Cactus League Spring Training games take sunblock, blankets and bathing suits. *Information: cactusleague.com.*

DAVID H. SMITH

19 Desert Botanical Garden

PHOENIX

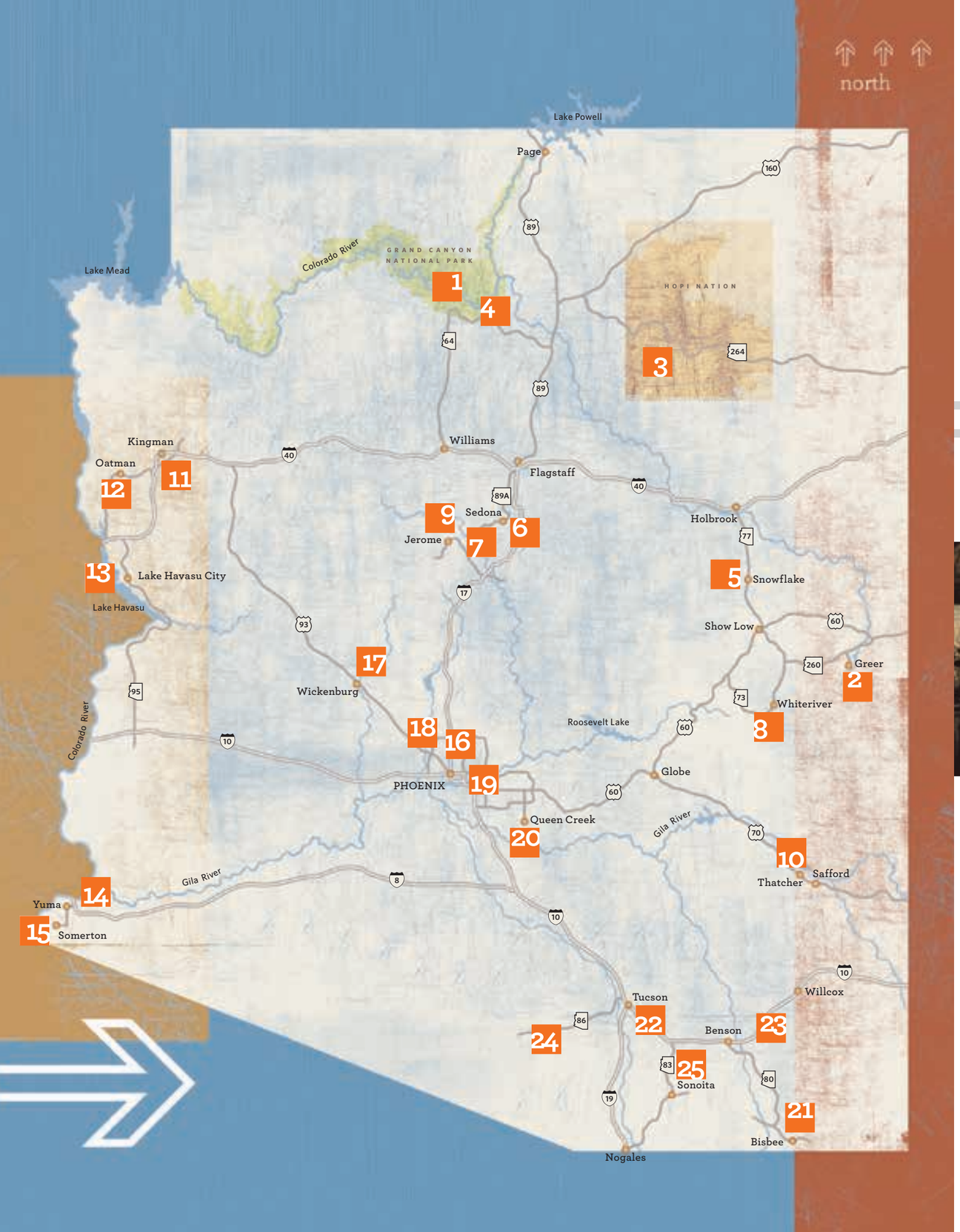
People say that when you rub the leaves of a creosote bush together, it smells exactly like the desert after it rains. Find out for yourself at Desert Botanical Garden. The 50-acre garden showcases some 20,000 different desert plants from all over the world, 139 of which are considered rare, threatened or endangered. That's no small feat, especially when you take into account that Desert Botanical Garden also features a variety of events and exhibits, including flashlight tours, photography, art and even live musical performances. And there's more. Classes are available for everyone from preschoolers to adults on just about any topic under the sun, including gardening and botanical art. *Information: 480-941-1225 or dbg.org.*

KERRICK JAMES

20 Schnepf Farms

QUEEN CREEK

Last fall they carved Muhammad Ali's likeness into a cornfield. Think crop circles, only better. When they're not using their vegetables for giant portraits, the folks at Schnepf Farms invite visitors to come and pick them. Available November through June, the "U-pick Garden & Orchards" offer a variety of pickings, from peaches and plums to sweet peas and pickling cucumbers. For $1.50 per pound, you can fill up on fresh, organic fruits and vegetables until your arms hurt. Afterward, stop by the Fresh From the Farm restaurant for a delicious home-cooked meal. The entire Schnepf family is known to roam around inside, with Carrie in the kitchen making garlic mashed potatoes and pot roast, while the rest of the family socializes with guests. You won't get service like that at the local grocery store. *Information: 480-987-3100 or schnepffarms.com.*



DAVID H. SMITH

Queen Mine Tour

21

Bisbee Mining & Historical Museum

BISBEE

In its glory days, Bisbee was one of the copper mining capitals of the world. Some estimates put the amount of copper extracted at about 8 billion pounds — enough, according to the Bisbee Mining & Historical Museum, to construct a 3/4-inch pipe from the town to the moon more than three times. Mining ceased in the '70s, but thanks to some help from the Smithsonian Institution, the museum features a state-of-the-art mining exhibit called "Digging In," which is a replica of an underground mine. For those who want a more authentic experience, the Queen Mine Tour — on which guests wear hard hats and explore the real deal — is just a short walk away. *Information: 520-432-7071 or bisbeemuseum.org.*

84th Annual La Fiesta de los Vaqueros

TUCSON

22

"The pioneer spirit lives. Heroic memories never die," wrote Tucson Annual Rodeo Committee Chairman Leighton Kramer in the program for the very first La Fiesta de los Vaqueros rodeo in 1925. It's never just been about the rodeo, though. The event wouldn't be complete without a massive parade, and this one, scheduled for February 26, is about as big as they get. Among other things, the organizers of La Fiesta de los Vaqueros have exclusive bragging rights for being the largest nonmotorized parade in the United States, as well as one of the largest winter rodeos. Today, attendees have a few advantages over those who saw the inaugural rodeo — mainly the ability to drink beer. Because the fiesta began during Prohibition, alcohol was outlawed. *Information: 520-294-1280 or tucsonrodeoparade.com.*

RICHARD MAACK

La Fiesta de los Vaqueros

JACK DYKINGA

Amerind Foundation

23

Amerind Foundation Museum

DRAGOON MOUNTAINS

The phrase, "But it's a dry heat!" takes on a different meaning when used around the Amerind Foundation Museum. Director John Ware doesn't try to convince people the weather there isn't that bad; instead, he uses it to explain why so many Indian artifacts were preserved in the desert. Moisture destroys things like pottery, but that's not much of an issue in Southern Arizona. In addition to an impressive collection of artifacts, the Amerind Foundation also has an art museum. Visitors are invited to pack a lunch and take advantage of the picnic area, which features great views of the surrounding mountains. *Information: 520-586-3666 or amerind.org.*

Scope Out Saturn

KITT PEAK OBSERVATORY

24

It's no secret that Southern Arizona is one of the best places in the world for astronomy, and Kitt Peak is no exception. Located about 90 minutes southwest of Tucson, the observatory at Kitt Peak provides opportunities for the public to experience the sky. Tours are offered daily, and special programs throughout the year showcase planets and other celestial bodies. "Scope Out Saturn" happens every year in early March, when Saturn becomes visible. Guests view the ringed planet through telescopes at the visitors center and get a copy of an image captured that night on a CD. Pack a jacket — temperatures that time of year average around freezing — and plan on spending the night at a Tucson hotel because many activities at Kitt Peak conclude after midnight. *Information: 520-318-8726 or www.noao.edu/outreach/kpvc.*

Empire Ranch Foundation

SONOITA

25

At one point, Nova Scotia native Walter Vail practically owned Southeastern Arizona — he acquired more than 1 million acres in about 20 years. The Vail family sold the Empire Ranch in 1928, a half-century after Walter first bought it, and over the next 70 years, the land was used for raising cattle, mining and movies. Some of the more notable films shot around the property include the original *3:10 to Yuma* and *Gunfight at the O.K. Corral*. Eventually, the ranch ended up in the hands of the government, which declared it a national conservation area. Since then, the Empire Ranch Foundation has attempted to maintain and restore the grounds as a testament to the difficulties of frontier life. *Information: 888-364-2829 or empireranchfoundation.org.*

the Light of Day

It was Newton who first demonstrated that white light consists of a roughly equal mixture of all visible wavelengths, which can be separated to yield the colors of the spectrum. George Stocking isn't Sir Isaac Newton, but as you'll see in this month's portfolio, he's an aficionado when it comes to using natural light in landscape photography. You might even call him the master.

By George Stocking

COLORFUL CRESCENDO

The last light of day intensifies hues of coral, rose, lavender and sapphire that saturate the Arizona sky above Wukoki Ruin in the Wupatki National Monument, north of Flagstaff. The monument is home to several ancient pueblos built by the Sinaguan people during the 12th century.

BLUE NOTES

A cerulean sky and a bank of cirrocumulus clouds provide a dramatic backdrop for the balancing act of a massive boulder along the Echo Park Trail in Southeastern Arizona's Chiricahua National Monument (above). Sunset illuminates teddy bear chollas that dot the rocky hillsides of Phoenix's South Mountain Park (right).

MORNING HAS BROKEN

Mist rises from Black Canyon Lake as day dawns on the Mogollon Rim. The sunrise tints delicate clouds a brilliant orange above the lake's still surface, which offers a mirror image of the surrounding ponderosa pine-covered hills.

STRAWBERRY FALLS FOREVER

Along Northern Arizona's Little Colorado River, a brilliant sunset transforms the silt-laden, brown water of Grand Falls into strawberry-colored streams.

SONGS OF THE SOUTHWEST

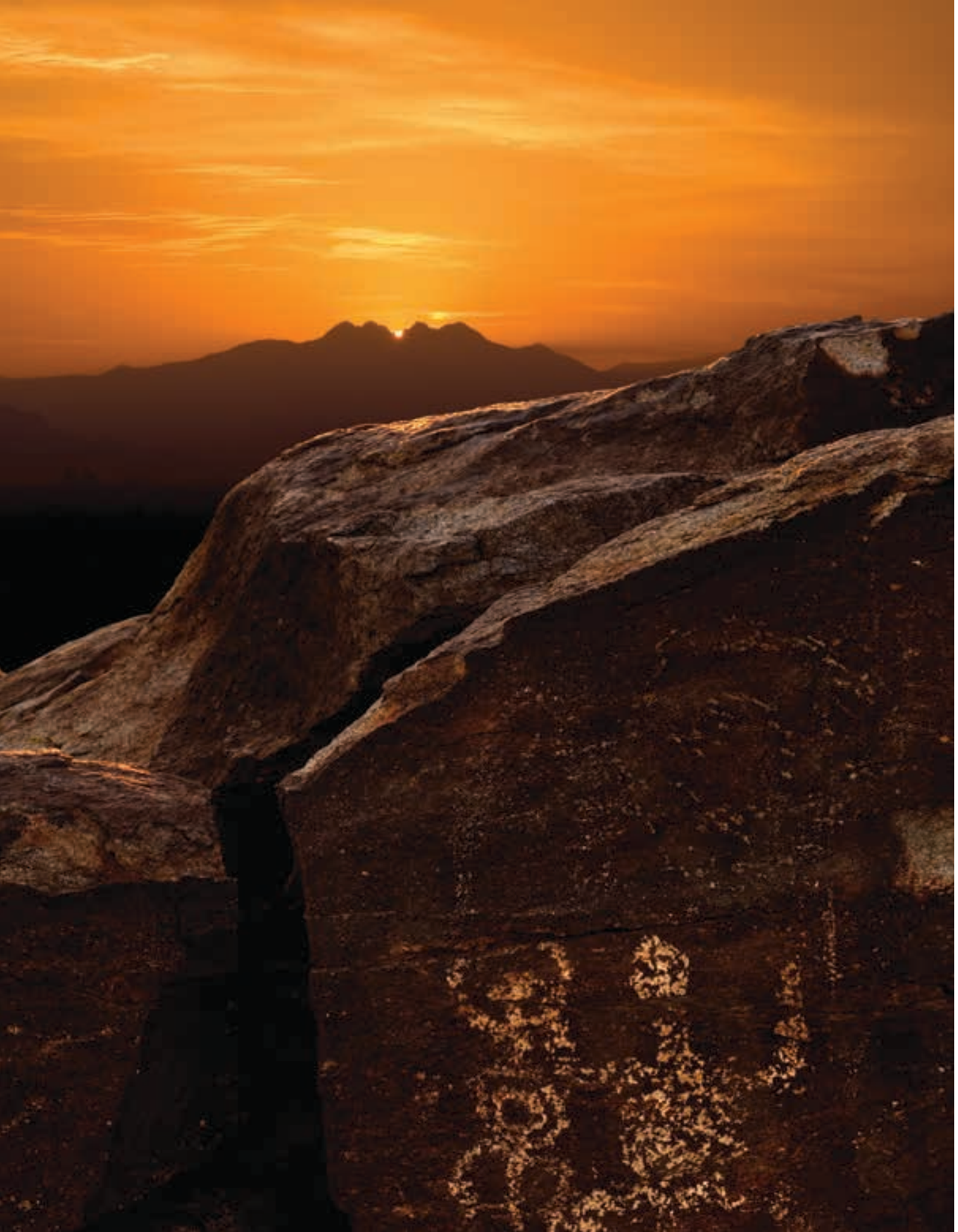
A dusty haze permeates the long rays of sunset breaking through clouds drifting over a landscape of saguaro and teddy bear cholla cactuses in South Mountain Park (left). A patch of sneezeweed adds a golden glow to a misty meadow situated beneath the San Francisco Peaks (below) near Flagstaff.

Battle Ground

TELESCOPES ON MOUNT GRAHAM, SNOWMAKING MACHINES IN THE SAN FRANCISCO PEAKS, A HIGHWAY THROUGH SOUTH MOUNTAIN ... THESE ARE JUST SOME OF THE CONFLICTS BREWING OVER SACRED NATIVE LANDS AND THE USES THAT 21ST CENTURY AMERICA HAS IN MIND FOR THEM. *THE NEW YORK TIMES* CALLS IT "A NEW KIND OF INDIAN WAR," WITH ARIZONA AS ITS GROUND ZERO.

By Lawrence W. Cheek

A cross petroglyph, etched by prehistoric Hohokams as a symbol representing Venus, echoes the planet itself shining above the horizon at South Mountain Park in Phoenix.
PHOTOGRAPH BY FRANK ZULLO



On the summer solstice, viewed from what was likely a prehistoric Hohokam sun-watching site, the sun peeks between Four Peaks, a location sacred to the ancient tribe. PHOTOGRAPH BY FRANK ZULLO

A wraparound two-story window in the lobby of the Sheraton Wild Horse Pass Resort & Spa dramatically cradles a view of Vii Kwxas on the horizon, 5 miles away. Any number of Arizona mountains would practically fill this window, but modest Vii Kwxas — known as South Mountain to the more than 4 million residents of Metropolitan Phoenix — rises only 2,690 feet, a long, low geologic baguette with the usual plunging canyons and spiky ridges kneaded mostly into gentle creases. By Arizona standards, it's practically a throwaway mountain.

But these are not the standards of the Gila River Indian Community people, whose ancestors lived here for a millennium before a place named "Arizona" came to exist, and who still view the mountain as a sacred place. Deeper than sacred, actually: Indians deploy the word because it's the best approximation English can muster, but a sacred mountain is more than a church or consecrated ground. It's seen as a living thing, a vital organ in the tribe's history, culture, ecology and spiritual life.

"We don't idolize it, we don't worship it," says Tribal Councilman Anthony Villareal Sr. "But it has such a close connection to us that we are a part of it."

We're talking in the Sheraton's lobby, where we enjoy a prime view of the mountain, and of something that might strike non-native Americans as wryly ironic. The Gila River tribes own this luxury resort, along with three casinos, three golf courses and an industrial park. This development has dramatically ratcheted up the community's prosperity, thanks largely to the proximity of booming Phoenix. (Sky Harbor International Airport is only 11 miles away.) Phoenix wants to complete a freeway loop by stringing a segment of the South Mountain Freeway across tribal land or over the mountain. The tribes have firmly said no to both.

"When you destroy a piece of the mountain, you destroy a piece of us," Villareal tells me. "It's like cutting off a piece of my finger because it's in your way."

South Mountain is one in a spreading series of knotty conflicts between off-reservation sacred lands and the uses that 21st century America has in mind for these same places — roads, resource extraction, recreation and even scientific research. *The New York Times* has called it "a new kind of Indian war" and reported on Arizona as its ground zero. One reason is the state's rich quilt of native peoples; 21 federally recognized tribes reside here. Another reason might be the character of the powerfully etched and sculpted landscape itself. It doesn't seem like a vast leap from feeling awed and inspired, as modern non-Indians do, to vesting a mountain with a spiritual dimension.

Since 1988, the White Mountain and San Carlos Apaches have protested the use of Mount Graham as a site for observatories. There are now three on the mountain's 10,472-foot Emerald Peak summit, including the 2004 Large Binocular Telescope Observatory, touted as the world's most powerful. But Mount Graham is also home to the *gaan*, four benevolent spirits who long ago instructed the Apaches that they must not be disturbed. The mountain is a traditional place of prayer and a repository of natural resources used in spiritual ceremonies. The Forest Service's lease expires in April; the Apaches continue to oppose its renewal.

In 2004, Arizona Snowbowl, Flagstaff's 70-year-old downhill ski area, floated an expansion plan that included using treated municipal effluent for making snow on the San Francisco Peaks. In 2005, 13 tribes filed suit to block both the expansion and snowmaking scheme. The Indians lost the first round in U.S. District Court, won the first appellate hearing before a three-judge panel, and then lost again in August 2008 when the full Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals made its ruling. The case could go to the Supreme Court.

The San Francisco Peaks, Arizona's highest range at 12,633 feet, are sacred to several tribes. The Hopis believe their Katsinam, or deities, reside there. The Katsinam are vital mediators between the physical and spiritual worlds, bringing life-giving rain to the crops. To the Navajos, the peaks are among the four sacred mountain ranges that define the tribe's homeland — and, at an even deeper level, its identity.

"Like the human body, the mountain can tolerate some level of contamination," Navajo activist Robert Tohe tells me at a coffeehouse in downtown Flagstaff. "People should have the enjoyment of the mountain. Skiing, hiking, camping ... these have taken place for a long time, and not in a contentious way. But the Snowbowl development did not bring tribal perspectives to the table."

The use of reclaimed water is the hottest button, and it's deeper than the gesture of symbolically peeing on the sacred slope. Navajos assiduously avoid contact with the dead, and Flagstaff's municipal water is, of course, used in mortuaries. In spiritual terms, no degree of chemical treatment can remove that contamination.

The Snowbowl expansion advocates contend that science has declared the treated effluent to be absolutely safe, and that the snowmaking serves a broad constituency. In drought years, the winter playground struggles to survive; in the 2001-02 season, it was open only four days. "There's room for quality recreation on the San Francisco Peaks," J.R. Murray, Snowbowl's general manager, said in a statement. "The peaks are very special to everyone in Northern Arizona, not just the tribes. Skiers have been very patient and loyal. They deserve better facilities and a better skiing experience, like at other ski areas located on public land."

The dispute has polarized Flagstaff, whose population is 10 percent Native American. At first there was a breakout of pro-Indian "Save the Peaks" bumper stickers, quickly followed by "Reclaim the Peaks" retorts, and finally the parody, "Pave the Peaks." Mayor Sara Presler-Hoefle chooses her words carefully, trying to weigh the competing interests: "This is much more complex than any single issue. We must balance the phenomenal experience and religious culture of the Native American community with the economic priorities of cities, states and the nation. It's a real challenge, but I don't see it as an impossibility."

Attorney Laura Berglan, who represents the tribes, drills right to the heart of the issue. "It's very difficult for Anglo-Americans to wrap their minds around the Indian concept of sacredness in the land," she says. "I think the real problem is not being connected enough to nature to grasp the effect that the introduction of reclaimed water would have."

"MAYBE YOU CAN UNDERSTAND IT IF YOU LOOK IN POETIC TERMS," Tohe says. He doesn't specifically mention his sister, but I've already read some of Laura Tohe's poetry in one of her books, *Tséyi', Deep in the Rock: Reflections on Canyon de Chelly.* She teaches English and American Indian literature at Arizona State University, and frequently addresses her Navajo homeland in her work, as here:

I happily step over into existence,
into our canyons,
our rivers,
our mountains,
our valleys.

It's a powerful concept, and not really so abstract. Tohe is writing that apart from nature, she is nothing. And this is the core idea in the Indian relationship with Earth, weather, plants and animals: All nature is connected, and all things, animate or not, must show respect for each other. When they don't, the intricate web of Creation fails.

What's intriguing — almost uncanny — is that Aldo Leopold, the Wisconsin ecologist whose 1949 book, *A Sand County Almanac*, helped trigger the environmental movement, said essentially the same thing. In fact, Robert A. Williams, a Lumbee tribal member who teaches law and American Indian studies at the University of Arizona, assigns his students to read Leopold. "I like Leopold because he talks like an Indian," Williams says. "He shows that these worlds are bridgeable and translatable."

The human species, Leopold wrote, needs to abandon its view of itself as master of nature and learn to live instead as a respectful citizen. His most frequent quotation sums up his philosophy precisely: "We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect."

Even more intriguingly, when, in the 1990s, assorted historians and technology gurus began talking about the phenomenon of unintended consequences, many of the examples seemed to mesh with traditional Indian thinking about nature. The epidemic of forest fires, cited in Edward Tenner's 1996 book, *Why Things Bite Back: Technology and the Revenge of Unintended Consequences*, forms a perfect example. A century of suppressing natural fires, along with people settling in scenic lands at the fringe of fire-prone forests, has dramatically escalated the danger and destructiveness of fires.

Native American spiritual philosophy has eerily anticipated science. The idea that all living creatures and even inanimate things, such as rocks and weather, are interdependent probably arose many centuries before Leopold. The idea that one could harm the environment through spiritual pollution is a prelude to the modern understanding of chemical pollution. Many of the decisions ancient people made about where and how to live may have had their foundations in religious practice, but they seem altogether logical in light of what we know today.

For example, the O'odham people — which include the Gila River tribes today and their likely ancestors, the prehistoric Hohokam people — traditionally believed that human illness was caused by ceremonial lapses or the ill will of animals. That might be one reason South Mountain was a ceremonial center, not a homesite. Believing that their own health pivoted on nature, the ancient people did what they could to preserve the integrity of the animals' environments. They made mistakes, of course: The Hohokam and Ancestral Pueblo civilizations probably collapsed because they expanded beyond the natural resources — including small game and wood for fire and shelter — available to support them. But they instinctively understood the interdependent weave of nature, and constructed an elaborate religious system to try to preserve it.

"Respect is the bottom line," says Jennifer Allison-Ray, lieutenant governor of the modern Gila River Indian Community. "Respect for nature, respect for all religions, and respect for the Creator, whatever he or she may be called."

THERE'S UNLIKELY TO BE ANY READY RESOLUTION TO THE SPREADING rash of disputes over traditional sacred lands. Williams says there's "a whole matrix of machinery" now in place that gives the tribes tools to challenge new uses of their traditional sites, even when they're far off-reservation. First among these is the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993, which says that governments may not "substantially burden religious exercise without compelling justification." Thanks to casino and resort income, many tribes now have the resources to hire lawyers and pursue expensive legal action. And Williams has noted an interesting phenomenon: "The tribes that have been most successful at gaming operations are the same ones that have been most committed to culture and language preservation. It's no different from the non-Indian world: Culture and religion always require subsidies."

Mount Graham offers astronomers ideal viewing conditions, but the White Mountain and San Carlos Apaches protest the telescopes disturbing their sacred sky island. PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID MUENCH

"RESPECT FOR NATURE, RESPECT FOR ALL RELIGIONS, AND RESPECT FOR THE CREATOR, WHATEVER HE OR SHE MAY BE CALLED."

But a positive benefit for non-Indian cultures might be a reappraisal of the way we relate to nature. Leopold has pointed the direction: Let us quit thinking about land and the biotic community in terms of economic value, he wrote. Assume that everything has value and a right to exist. Only then can humans avoid destroying some vital link in the web that we don't yet understand.

Essayist Scott Russell Sanders, another white man who might be accused of thinking like an Indian, has written that sacred stories in all cultures "arise from our intuition that beneath the flow of Creation there is order."

After my conversation with Villareal and Allison-Ray at the Sheraton, I drive a few miles to the South Mountain foothills and park, where I walk for a mile or two along an arroyo bed. A bit of the arroyo has been professionally landscaped for the benefit of the nearby suburban development. The banks are lined with staked mesquite and paloverde trees; the riverbed has been raked clean and dotted with strategic boulders to discourage off-roaders.

After a few hundred feet, the landscaping yields to the scruffy chaos of nature. As a creature of civilization, I instinctively feel more comfortable in the tended landscape. But it's the other one — the scruffy, unkempt wrinkle in the desert — where the true underlying order resides, because it will maintain itself without intervention. That is the truly sacred, the place where we go to try to understand Creation.

WING MAN

Bill Brooks isn't your everyday Arizonan. Not because he's a judo master. There are plenty of those. And not because he once hosted a cooking show, trained as an astronaut and acted as an extra in B-Westerns. No, Bill Brooks stands out because of his longtime role as sidekick and personal pilot for John Wayne. It's a story more improbable than any Hollywood movie plot.

By Keridwen Cornelius

Bill Brooks, John Wayne's longtime friend and pilot, wears the Duke's jacket and cowboy hat outside the 26 Bar Ranch. PHOTOGRAPH BY RYAN B. STEVENSON

Bill Brooks' instructions were cryptic: "Fly to Orange County, California, pick up 'J.W.' and fly him to 'Pop's ranch.'" But since the instructions came from William Randolph Hearst Jr., son of the billionaire publishing mogul, and "Pop's ranch" was Hearst Castle, Brooks didn't ask any questions.

He arrived at the airport announcing, "I'm here to pick up J.W." A 6-foot-4-inch man in a floppy hat turned around. It was John Wayne. When Brooks respectfully addressed him as "Mr. Wayne," the actor set him straight. "The name's Duke," he said, removing his hat to reveal a toupee-less bald patch. And that, as they say in Hollywood, was the beginning of a beautiful friendship.

Just how Bill Brooks, a Phoenix native with ranch roots, became not only the personal pilot for John Wayne and a coterie of celebrities, but also hosted his own cooking show, became a judo master and even trained as an astronaut is a story more improbable than any movie plot.

Born in 1931, Brooks was raised by his maternal grandparents in Phoenix but spent much of his time at his paternal grandparents' ranch near Sulphur Springs. There, his grandmother, a Comanche Indian, taught young Brooks how to cook Mexican food for the ranch hands, who were all Mexican cowboys. His prowess with picante sauce would change his life. So would Barry Goldwater.

One day, the future U.S. senator — who happened to be Brooks' scoutmaster in the Boy Scouts — invited Brooks to help him deliver watermelons in his private plane to Prescott. After they gained altitude, Goldwater turned the controls over to the 14-year-old, who flew the plane for a half-hour. Brooks was bitten by the aviation bug.

On his 16th birthday, he earned two licenses: a driver's and a pilot's, the latter funded by his somewhat skeptical stepfather. No one but his grandmother had the chutzpah to fly with the teenaged aviation sensation. So, he fitted her with a leather helmet, put her in the backseat of an old biplane, and they took off from Phoenix's Air Haven Airport to soar over the vast patchwork of farmland and citrus groves. "After that," Brooks boasts, "I was mighty popular with the girls."

As a teenager, the ranch-bred boy also embraced the role of wrangler. With his skill on horseback and his uniform of Levi's, boots and a Stetson, he applied and was quickly hired as an extra in "a whole bunch of those cheap B-Westerns filmed in Sedona and the Granite Dells near Prescott," he says.

Brooks' cinematic résumé reads like the marquee at a John Wayne movie marathon: *Angel and the Bad Man*, filmed in Sedona; *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*, set in Monument Valley; *Rio Grande*, shot in Moab, Utah; and several more. It was during these summers that Brooks first met the Duke, who wasn't above partying with the entire crew, including wide-eyed young extras.

As the boy became a man, he traded biplanes for B-29 bombers in the Air Force during the Korean War. "Young boys in those days wanted to be soldiers or pilots," Brooks reminisces. Because his general believed all crewmembers should be able to defend themselves, Brooks learned judo at the Kodokan School in Tokyo, earning his black belt.

But he got "mighty lonesome" overseas, so while on leave he asked his sweetheart, Martha, to marry him. He finished his duty at home with the Phoenix Air Guard.

The 1950s and '60s were busy decades for Bill and Martha Brooks. Bill held a steady job as an engineer for the Mountain States Telephone Co. He became chief judo instructor at the Phoenix YMCA, coaching Martha to black-belt status and a national women's judo championship title. The couple had two daughters, Paige and Gail, and a son, William T. Brooks IV. "Every time we stopped at an air base, we had another kid," Bill jokes. "Nobody ever told us what was making it happen."

Brooks also published a cookbook, *If You Like*

John Wayne's personal Colt .45 six-shooter and holster used in the movie *The Shootist* are some of the numerous memorabilia owned by Bill Brooks. PHOTOGRAPH BY RYAN B. STEVENSON

RIGHT: Visitors to 26 Bar Ranch, west of Eagar, are greeted by friendly horses and a weathered welcome sign. PHOTOGRAPH BY RYAN B. STEVENSON

Bill Brooks bought the foreman's house at 26 Bar Ranch, where John Wayne raised Hereford cattle with his partner, Louis Johnson, in the 1960s and '70s. PHOTOGRAPH BY RYAN B. STEVENSON

It Hot, featuring the Mexican-food recipes his grandmother taught him. He competed on the chili-cooking circuit, which earned him the nickname "Chili Bill" and took him to such far-flung, non-chili-eating locales as Hawaii, Cancun and Tokyo. "It's like playing professional golf, only you're cooking chili," explains Brooks, who eventually became a chili champion. His secret? "Only meat, no beans." Plus, he cooked a Southwestern chili like his grandmother taught him, which means spicy. "A lot of Eastern people ... their chili was more like a spaghetti sauce," he scoffs.

After 15 years, Brooks felt that his engineer career was stagnating. Then, in 1966 an opportunity arose in the form of pancakes. Brooks' father and a business partner had bought the Golden Carriage Pancake House in San Simeon, California, but spent more time bickering than baking. The father wanted out and offered to sell the business to Bill for $10,000.

"I was never the kind who could settle down to one thing," Brooks says. So he and Martha sold their house in Chandler and moved to San Simeon, at the foot of Hearst Castle.

Despite all the pancakes, two very lean years followed, as the castle had not caught on yet as a tourist destination. When it did become a tourist site, "We got so many customers we didn't know what to do," Brooks recalls. "We hired every kid in high school."

The tourism boom brought the Brookses enough cash to build an adjacent 50-unit motel — the Golden Carriage Inn — and eventually buy the Paso Robles Flying Service at nearby Paso Robles Municipal Airport. Through the flying service, he signed a gem of a contract: to fly the Hearst family, which he would do for nearly 10 years.

"We became pretty good friends," says Brooks of William Randolph Hearst Jr., who invited the Brookses to weekends at his mansions. The couple hobnobbed with international tycoons, marveled at the gold-plated bathroom fixtures and slept in a bed once graced by John F. Kennedy. Though Martha was concerned that she and Bill were out of their league, the two became an instant hit with the crowds of celebrities, none of whom were airplane-flying, chili-cooking judo masters.

Brooks soon launched a small commuter airline, Golden Carriage Air, and two judo schools, recruiting instructors from his former school in Japan. He and Martha also sponsored a stock car dubbed "Golden Carriage," which led Brooks to a first-place win in an owners' and mechanics' race.

The Golden Carriage businesses became a family affair: Martha worked the cash register, Bill Jr. washed dishes, Paige and Gail served pancakes, and Bill flew the planes. Through his connection with the Hearsts, Bill piloted celebs Loretta Young, Jane Russell, Irene Dunn and, of course, John Wayne.

John Wayne didn't remember Bill Brooks as a B-Western actor, but their friendship grew at 6,000 feet as they flew between California and Wayne's Arizona ranches — Red River Ranch near Casa Grande and 26 Bar Ranch near Eagar. Brooks' chili recipe, which he dubbed "Duke's Chili," became Wayne's favorite (though Wayne liked to spike it with three shots of tequila). When Wayne was filming *Brannigan* in London, he phoned Brooks and asked him to send 5 gallons of his chili for a cast and crew party. Bill and Martha cooked up a batch and flew it to San Francisco, where it boarded a London-bound plane. It was so popular with the Brits that Wayne's secretary and lover, Pat Stacy, had to hide a bowl so the Duke could have some.

He signed a gem of a contract: to fly the Hearst family, which he would do for nearly 10 years. "We became pretty good friends," says Brooks of William Randolph Hearst Jr.

As the years passed, John Wayne's health began to fade. "He got to where he couldn't breathe in the airplane without oxygen," Brooks recalls. But the prideful Duke didn't like people seeing him sucking on oxygen, so Brooks helped him hide his secret.

In return, Wayne nudged Brooks into showbiz. Literally.

Brooks, Wayne and Hearst were flying back from a VIP-packed soiree when Hearst mentioned he wanted to launch a Western cooking show on television. He asked Brooks if he knew anyone who could host it, but the pilot said he didn't. At that point Duke jabbed Brooks three times in the ribs, cuing Hearst to say, "Well, how about you, Chili Bill? You've done just about everything else." Brooks was dumbfounded. "Give it a try," Wayne urged. "You might just like showbiz." Brooks later learned it was the Duke's idea.

And so Bill Brooks went from Western movie extra to Western cooking show star, hosting 150 episodes of *Chili Bill's Kitchen*. The show was shot mostly in Sedona at the well-known Coffeepot Restaurant, then owned by actress Jane Russell. Brooks went on to produce and direct two documentaries — one about gunfighters of the West, the other about the Hearsts.

In 1979, John Wayne died, but he remained central to Brooks' life. At Wayne's posthumous 75th birthday, Brooks offered Wayne's son Michael $5,000 for part of his collection of the Duke's memorabilia. It would become much more than a personal collection.

During the '80s and '90s, a series of start-ups stopped short for the Brookses. They returned to Arizona, opening a restaurant and then a gas turbine jet-engine company. Both were shuttered. Bill applied for astronaut training under NASA's new Senior Astronaut Program, but after beginning his training, the Space Shuttle *Columbia* exploded, putting the program on hold. Then, in 2000, Martha, Bill's wife of 50 years, passed away.

Now 77, Brooks remains the consummate pilot and cowboy. He wears aviator suits as he lounges in his Cornville home, which is adorned with model airplanes, John Wayne's film props and some of Brooks' own artwork. (Yes, he paints, too.) From his window, he can gaze at Sedona, where so many of his teenaged movie-making memories transpired, and at House Mountain, where Martha's ashes are scattered.

Still able to pass his physical examinations at 77, Brooks would rather fly his single-engine Bonanza than drive in a car. PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFF KIDA

A few years ago, Brooks discovered John Wayne fan Web sites, where he could relive old times making movies and flying with the Duke. He returned to 26 Bar Ranch near Eagar, bought the foreman's house, and converted it into a John Wayne museum filled with the memorabilia he bought from Michael Wayne. Last summer, the memorabilia — including Wayne's '73 pickup truck — was moved to the Territorial Museum at Wild West Junction in Williams.

Now Brooks gives museum tours to people around the world. "You can't believe that after all these years there are still that many John Wayne nuts around," he says. But he's happy to oblige, regaling fans with personal tales about his friend, the Duke. Like the time Wayne accidentally walked into the swimming pool at a party, or the day he saved an old woman from losing her house in Eagar.

After meeting him, no doubt many of these John Wayne fans become Bill Brooks fans, too. He might not be a silver-screen icon, but as he says, "I've lived one helluva life."

For more information on Bill Brooks' collection of John Wayne memorabilia in the Territorial Museum at Wild West Junction, call 928-635-4512 or visit wildwestjunction.com.

Girls Club

What started as a girls weekend for two sisters from Phoenix has grown into an all-women travel brigade with more than 1,000 adopted "sisters." Fly-fishing, horseback riding, whitewater rafting ... that's how they spend their days. At night, they crash in their vintage Airstreams, et al. It's not that these women have anything against men, per se; they'd just rather hit the road without them.

by **JoBeth Jamison**

A cowgirl caravan of gussied-up vintage trailers makes camp in Monument Valley.

ABOVE: Nancy Springer (left) and co-founder Maurrie Sussman pose with Sussman's 1958 Holiday trailer.

A fierce wind blows across Monument Valley Navajo Tribal Park, where a strange and shiny parade has commenced along its sacred earthen avenues. One by one, more than 30 cars and trucks emerge through a dense cloud of sand on the western horizon. Countless families descend on this place every year, but it's clear by the puzzled looks on the faces of the locals and visitors who stop to watch them pass that no one has ever seen a family vacation quite like this before.

All but a few of these vehicles are pulling small trailers — mostly vintage sleepers — each colorfully decorated with painted murals, names, stickers or at least a number. What looks like the circus is actually the cowgirl caravan, a vacation posse better known as Sisters on the Fly.

"See that?" A giddy woman's voice broadcasts over a chain of two-way radios. Her finger defies the sandblasting gusts from the window of an SUV and points to the Three Sisters rock formation. "That's us!" she squeals. "The sisters!"

"You bet," replies another female voice, this one from a behemoth black pickup in the lead. "Just as long as I'm the skinny one."

The voice and the truck belong to Maurrie Sussman, also known as Sister No. 1, the convivial co-creator of this all-women travel brigade.

A decade ago, Sussman and her real sister, Becky Clarke (Sister No. 2), were adventuring in Montana. With wine in hand after an empowering day of fly-fishing, the two talked about how more women should experience this type of getaway — the kind typically enjoyed by men. So, they began extending invitations for fly-fishing adventures to fellow "sisters," and Sisters on the Fly was born. Since that day in 1999, the group has grown from two sisters to more than 1,000 — all by word of mouth.

The trailers, or the cowgirl caravan, began tagging along when the ladies realized that hauling their fannies and fishing gear all over the country would be a lot more enjoyable if they were hauling some of the comforts of home with them — like their bedrooms. Since husbands, kids and pets weren't allowed on the trips, they wouldn't need much, just enough space for a bed, a table and maybe a place to powder their noses and take shelter from the elements. If a small wine rack were to fit in there somewhere, even better.

Based out of Sussman's home in Phoenix, SOTF (not exactly "soft") started as a fly-fishing group, but as the numbers grew, so did the ideas for adventure. In addition to fishing trips, the Sisters have assembled for vineyard tours, whitewater rafting, horseback riding, classes at Cowgirl College (which is exactly what it sounds like) and, now, for sightseeing in Monument Valley.

This particular trip has been orchestrated entirely by Sussman, whose close friendship with the Yazzies, one of the area's oldest families, has made possible not only an intimate look at the Navajo way of life, but a special Diné blessing ceremony to be conducted for one of the Sisters who's been seeking reconnection with her lost Native American heritage.

Renowned Navajo rug weaver Susie Yazzie, a 2005 Arizona Culture Keeper who is now 96 and still lives in Monument Valley, has graciously agreed to host the ladies on her vast expanse of land, while her son, Lonnie Yazzie (who recently passed away), has offered to guide them across it. He and his young nephew, Nez, lead the caravan past the Yazzie homestead to Lamb Canyon, on the south side of Saddle Rock.

This isn't their first rodeo — the Sisters move in like clockwork, knowing just how much space to take for themselves and how much to leave for the rig behind them, creating a perfect circle of horsepower and carriages.

Immediately, they go to work. Sussman's cousin, Laura La Chance (Sister No. 66), sets up the kitchen and communal eating area. Molly Westgate and Kati Weingartner (Sister No. 190), of Mesa, set up an old dryer basin and a custom-welded stand for the campfire and help unload two truckbeds filled to the brim with pet and livestock food, which Sussman requested everyone take along as an offering of gratitude for the Yazzies. There's never a lack of volunteers for the community duties, but looking out at the cul-de-sac of trailers, it's easy to see which task is everyone's favorite: setting up their own personal homesteads, all of which are as unique and full of character as the Sisters themselves.

What began as a practical travel solution turned into a challenging hobby. Now, finding and restoring 12- to 24-foot vintage trailers is the signature element of the sisterhood and one of its primary membership draws. SOTF trailers date back to the early 1950s and include rare models made by Holiday, Shasta, Aljoa, Scotsman, Aloha, Fireball and Airstream. Where do they find them?

"In people's yards," says Tammy Phillips (Sister No. 345), of Salt Lake City. "You drive by and notice them, then you keep driving by, and one day you knock and say, 'I noticed this has been sitting here,' then you make them an offer."

Elaine Block (Sister No. 151) talked the Forest Service into selling "Sassy Sister," her 1952 Boles Aero trailer.

Leora Hunsaker (Sister No. 52), who joined SOTF after one of the members brought a trailer to her sign shop in Globe and asked her to "put a cowgirl Betty Boop" on it, says that her 1966 Jet, "Lazy Ass Ranch," was a "hunting shack fixer-upper." Others found their rigs online through various trailer-enthusiast clubs and Web sites.

Once acquired, the trailers become the equivalent of muscle cars for men — an outlet of creative energy and personal expression. The Sisters obsess over every detail to make them strictly their own, to impress the others and, in many cases, to top them.

LEFT: Like many of the sisters, Jane Bischoff didn't know much about trailers before she rebuilt and decorated her Serro Scotty, "Turquoise Nugget."

ABOVE: The sisters celebrate with an exuberant photo-op at John Ford Point, named for the director whose films showcased Monument Valley.

The gang gathers in renowned weaver Susie Yazzie's hogan to learn the techniques of Navajo rug making.

RIGHT: Maurrie Sussman shares a laugh with Navajo guide and "honorary sister" Lonnie Yazzie, who passed away shortly after this trip.

Sussman bought "Lucy," a 1958 Holiday — easily identified by the hand-painted red Pegasus, the cowgirl dressed in black and the Sisters on the Fly logo — for $400, but she estimates that she's put about $10,000 into it. Edith Berry paid about the same for her 1961 Serro Scotty trailer, and rebuilt it from the wheels up. She estimates it's now worth about $70,000. But these ladies aren't in it for the money.

"At this age, it's like starting over again," says Sister No. 295 of her rebuilt Serro. "I had great fun doing the trailer because no one told me I couldn't. I never did anything like this. There's no amount of money that can compare to the sense of accomplishment."

In creating their mobile spaces, some seek a haven from the chaos and clutter of their daily lives and keep their trailers clean and simple. But the majority of them see the aluminum, fiberglass and steel as a blank canvas for creating alter egos; most of them are cowgirls. Then there are those like Vicky Kimling (Sister No. 94), of Scottsdale, whose playful pink and black trailer, "Floozy," is fashioned after an Old West bordello — right down to the pink satin bedding, the dangling fishnet stockings and the smell of cheap perfume.

Regardless of the trailers' individual flavors, the common thread of sisterhood ties them all together. No matter who signs on, they're welcomed as part of the estrogen-rich family. Walk through the "neighborhood" and you'll likely be gone a long while, just taking in everyone's hospitality — a cup of coffee here, a gin and tonic next door, a fresh loaf of bread down the way, or a jacket if you forgot to pack your own. You can even come away with a full tutorial on welding frames or overhauling a propane stove.

Very few of the Sisters come aboard knowing anything about camping, trailers, trucks or towing safety. The experience and lessons are passed on from one generation of Sisters to the next, a tradition they're now invited to witness in the Yazzie family.

It's not every day that Navajo families sacrifice one of their sheep for a meal, but the Yazzies, like the Sisters, see this as a special occasion. Cousins, friends, nieces, nephews, granddaughters and grandsons are all on hand to help prepare the feast and teach the Sisters how everything is done. They all know their roles. Not a single part of the mutton is wasted, not even the bodily waste. Everything can be either stewed, grilled, dried, woven, carved or fed to the dogs, which are only too happy to do their part. There's an art to this life, to this culture, and as the Sisters make their way back to camp after dinner, Sussman is beaming. She's happy that the Sisters are absorbing it respectfully and with the same enthusiasm that she has.

Sussman, who has a background in anthropology, met the Yazzies while working on irrigation projects on the reservation in the early '90s. Although, it would appear, from their spirited laughter and genuine admiration for one another, that Sussman was born into this family.

The idea of bringing her extended families together to experience one another appealed to her long before this weekend, but it also made her nervous. While new Sisters are always welcome, not everyone knows Sussman or what it means to have the trust and respect of the Yazzies, and what a truly special opportunity this is. After talking it over with Lonnie Yazzie again and again, she was encouraged to pick a weekend to see how it would go.

Prior to the trips, Sussman politely warns participants to "behave." In person, she'll tell you that means: "No bitching, proselytizing, preaching or pushing your wares or agenda." There might be a time and place for all of that, she says, but this is not it.

He explains the importance of clanship and ceremonies, and finding balance between the different aspects of nature.

When all eyes open to a morning of snow and rain, it's questionable as to whether this is the time to explore Monument Valley. Lamb Canyon has become a mud rink, consumed by wind, a steady drizzle of rain and intermittent snow flurries. But after a hearty meal of fresh fruit, Monte Cristo breakfast sandwiches and hot coffee with a little Bailey's Irish Cream, the show goes on with Lonnie and Nez acting as narrators and, on occasion, stand-up comedians.

Four-wheel-drive and a sense of adventure are being put to good use now as the Sisters, unhitched from their trailers, climb up and over the rock-and-mud hillsides where the dramatic weather turns out to be a scenic gift. The neighboring Totem Pole formation looks like a bony finger dipping into a dark, thick cream of clouds. Just down the road, rain drains through Big Hogan arch, creating a small waterfall that echoes lightly through the natural amphitheater.

Farther along the path, Ear of the Wind lives up to its name as spirited gusts pass through the natural rock window, ruffling the surrounding wild rhubarb and white-blooming desert primrose. Through the ear, Hunts Mesa looks like a sugary treat after a light dusting of fresh snow. Heading toward Goulding's Trading Post, Lonnie and Nez make sure the Sisters stop to enjoy north-facing views of Elephant Butte and the famous Mittens. And no trip to Monument Valley would be complete without a photo op at John Ford Point.

Upon the group's return, it's time for another Navajo feast and the special Blessing Way ceremony that Sussman has arranged with the Yazzies for Patti Kopf (Sister No. 408), of Flagstaff. After dinner, Kopf is led to the warm confines of Susie Yazzie's hogan, where she's dressed in a traditional velveteen blouse and gathered skirt, and where Susie Yazzie herself gently combs Kopf's long black hair into a customary knot with a long brush made of buffalo grass.

Susie Yazzie, often called the "Grandmother of Monument Valley," made famous the practice of depicting ceremonial sandpaintings in the Navajo rugs she began weaving at the age of 14 to support her six siblings after her mother died. According to Lonnie, who was her oldest son, these rugs show how everyone is the same.

Night has fallen. Their bellies full from Navajo tacos and ice cream with warm apples, the Sisters gather around the fire with the Yazzie family and friends to watch as Kopf is put back on track with her ancestors. Those who are familiar with Navajo history find this ceremony particularly remarkable, because Kopf's ancestry is Apache — traditional enemies of the Navajo. Lonnie acknowledges this, but kindly assures that both tribes descend from the Athabascan people, and are the only two Indian tribes south of Canada that share the Athabascan language. He explains the importance of clanship and ceremonies, and finding balance between the different aspects of nature, and reminds everyone that, like the sandpaintings show, "we are the same."

The Sisters smile knowingly at each other. Each one of them is different, but their desire and willingness to connect as a clan in this circle of wisdom makes them the same. It's what makes them want to share their lives and experiences. It's what will keep them coming back for more weekends like this. It's what makes them not just Sisters on the Fly, but family. Then, like hitches to trailers, they all lock arms and dance in a circle into the night.

For more information, visit sistersonthefly.com.

VOLCANOES & RUINS LOOP

Here's something different: a Sunday drive that'll take you to the moon, sort of, and then back in time — all within 70 miles.

BY ROBERT STIEVE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY
ROBERT McDONALD

Pick up a course catalog for Northern Arizona University, and you'll find the usual list of electives: history, geology, archaeology. It's not rocket science, but if you want to learn about yesteryear, volcanoes and artifacts, NAU is a great place to start.

Another option is a Sunday drive through Sunset Crater and Wupatki national monuments. History, geology and archaeology, as well as many other ologies, are part of the education you'll get on this 70-mile scenic loop. Of course, if you'd rather just sit back and enjoy the ride, you can do that, too.

The paved loop begins near Bonito Park Campground, which sits in the shadow of Sunset Crater. Before you take off, take a look around. Virtually every mountain you'll see is volcanic — in all, there are 600 volcanoes in the area. Sunset Crater is the youngest, and like its many siblings, it's dormant. In A.D. 1040, though, it blew its top. The eruptions continued, on and off, for almost 200 years, eventually creating the 1,000-foot cinder cone we see today. Even that, however, was almost lost.

In 1928, the crater was in the crosshairs when a movie production company wanting to film a landslide proposed blowing up the cinder cone. Fortunately, the locals weren't crazy about the idea and pushed for the crater's protection, which it received on May 26, 1930, when President Herbert Hoover established Sunset Crater National Monument. The word "Volcano" was added to the name in 1990, and today, the park occupies 3,040 acres surrounded by the Coconino National Forest.

The crater itself is the main attraction in the monument, and one of the best places to see it is from the fire lookout road that meanders up O'Leary Peak — the turnoff is just before the visitors center. A few miles farther is the Bonito Lava Flow. If you've never been to the moon, this is what it looks like. In fact, it's so lunar-like, NASA had its Apollo astronauts (including Neil Armstrong) train here in the 1960s.

Heading north from the higher elevations near Sunset Crater National Monument to the desert grasslands of Wupatki National Monument, you'll eventually come upon the abandoned ruins of the Sinagua people.

The Sinaguans were farmers who were forced north by the eruption and learned to use the dark ash as a kind of mulch, which conserved the area's scarce moisture longer than the native soil. Drought eventually pushed the Sinaguans out, but in their wake, they left behind a series of magnificent structures. The largest of these pueblos — Wukoki, Lomaki and Wupatki — are open to the public. In its heyday, Wupatki contained more than 100 rooms, and things stayed mostly intact until the 1880s, when sheepherders used the ruins as a camp.

From the ruins, the rest of the loop winds for about 10 miles back to U.S. Route 89. It's a peaceful drive, and with all the history, geology and archaeology out of the way, it's the perfect time to sit back and enjoy the ride.

EDITOR'S NOTE: For more scenic drives, pick up a copy of our book, *The Back Roads*. Now in its fifth edition, the book ($19.95) features 40 of the state's most scenic drives. To order a copy, call 800-543-5432 or visit arizonahighways.com.

LEFT: Sunset Crater erupted intermittently for 200 years before becoming the dormant, snow-blanketed cinder cone resting there today.

ABOVE: Lomaki Pueblo is one of several Sinaguan ruins situated in the fertile volcanic valleys of Wupatki National Monument.

KEVIN KIBSEY

tour guide

Note: Mileages are approximate.

Directions: From Flagstaff, go north on U.S. Route 89 for 12 miles to the Sunset Crater-Wupatki National Monument turnoff (Forest Road 545) and go east (right) to the visitors center. The loop begins at the visitors center and continues for approximately 50 miles, returning to U.S. 89.

Vehicle Requirements: None

Information: Sunset Crater, 928-714-0565 or nps.gov/sucr; Wupatki National Monument, 928-679-2349 or nps.gov/wupa

(511) Travelers in Arizona can visit az511.gov or dial 511 to get information on road closures, construction, delays, weather and more.

hike OF THE month

BELL TRAIL

If you've had too much eggnog and holiday cheer recently, this scenic route near Sedona is the perfect way to get back on track.

BY ROBERT STIEVE
PHOTOGRAPHY BY RANDY PRENTICE

This is one of those trails the locals like to keep to themselves for fear it'll be inundated by city mice searching for a dose of the great outdoors. However, unlike the Colonel's recipe, the secret's out. It's been out. Nevertheless, this trail is never too crowded. You won't be alone, but you won't be stuck in a conga line of neophytes, either.

Water rushes over sandstone and granite ledges (above and right) on Wet Beaver Creek.

The trailhead is located a stone's throw from Sedona Exit 298 off of Interstate 17. There are two main trails in the area — Apache Maid and Bell — and both take off from the Bruce Brockett Trailhead, which is named for the late poet, politician and cattleman who owned the surrounding V Bar V Ranch. As you look around, you'll see why he sank his roots in this vibrant red dirt. It's spectacular.

Like many of the trails around Sedona, the Bell Trail is doable any time of year. In the summer, Wet Beaver Creek, which parallels the trail, offers a respite from the heat. During the other three seasons, including winter, the creek is just another carrot at the end of the stick — with or without the water, this trek is one of the best.

The trail kicks off in a field of rocks and prickly pear cactuses. Watch your step. These things hate people. After about a mile or so, you'll come to a cattle gate, followed by a series of switchbacks that lead toward the creek. Although the Bell Trail doesn't intersect the creek until Bells Crossing, there are a number of side trails that'll take you down to the water, which runs year-round and is home to smallmouth bass and trout.

At the end of the switchbacks, you'll see a large dead cottonwood. Just beyond the tree, look up to the left at the hillside of prickly pears. If the sun is shining, the cactuses will appear as if they've been rigged with fiber optics. You won't see anything like this in Michigan.

After another mile or so of meandering, the trail leads to the boundary of Wet Beaver Creek Wilderness Area, which was established in 1984 and encompasses 6,000 acres. The Weir Trail veers to the right at this point; the Bell Trail continues east. As you head that way, look up, down, left or right and you'll get an eyeful. Eventually, the trail climbs to a narrow bench that runs along the canyon's north wall. It's the perfect place to kick back, listen to the creek and eat a Zone bar.

From there, the path drops down to the canyon bottom, where it finally fords the creek at Bells Crossing. Although the trail continues for another 1.5 miles to the south rim, this is the obvious turnaround point. In the summer, this is where you'll take your shoes off. In January, it's simply another dose of the great outdoors — the carrot at the end of the stick.

trail guide

LENGTH: 6.6 miles round-trip (to Bells Crossing)
DIFFICULTY: Easy
ELEVATION GAIN: 3,820 to 4,100 feet
DIRECTIONS: From Phoenix, take Interstate 17 north to Sedona Exit 298 and turn right onto Forest Road 618. Take FR 618 for 1.5 miles to the old Beaver Creek Ranger Station turnoff, turn left, and continue a quarter-mile to the trailhead parking lot.
INFORMATION: 928-282-4119 or www.fs.fed.us/r3/coconino

LEAVE NO TRACE ETHICS:

- Plan ahead and be prepared.
- Travel and camp on durable surfaces.
- Dispose of waste properly and pack out your trash.
- Leave what you find.
- Respect wildlife and minimize impact.
- Be considerate of others.

KEVIN KIBSEY

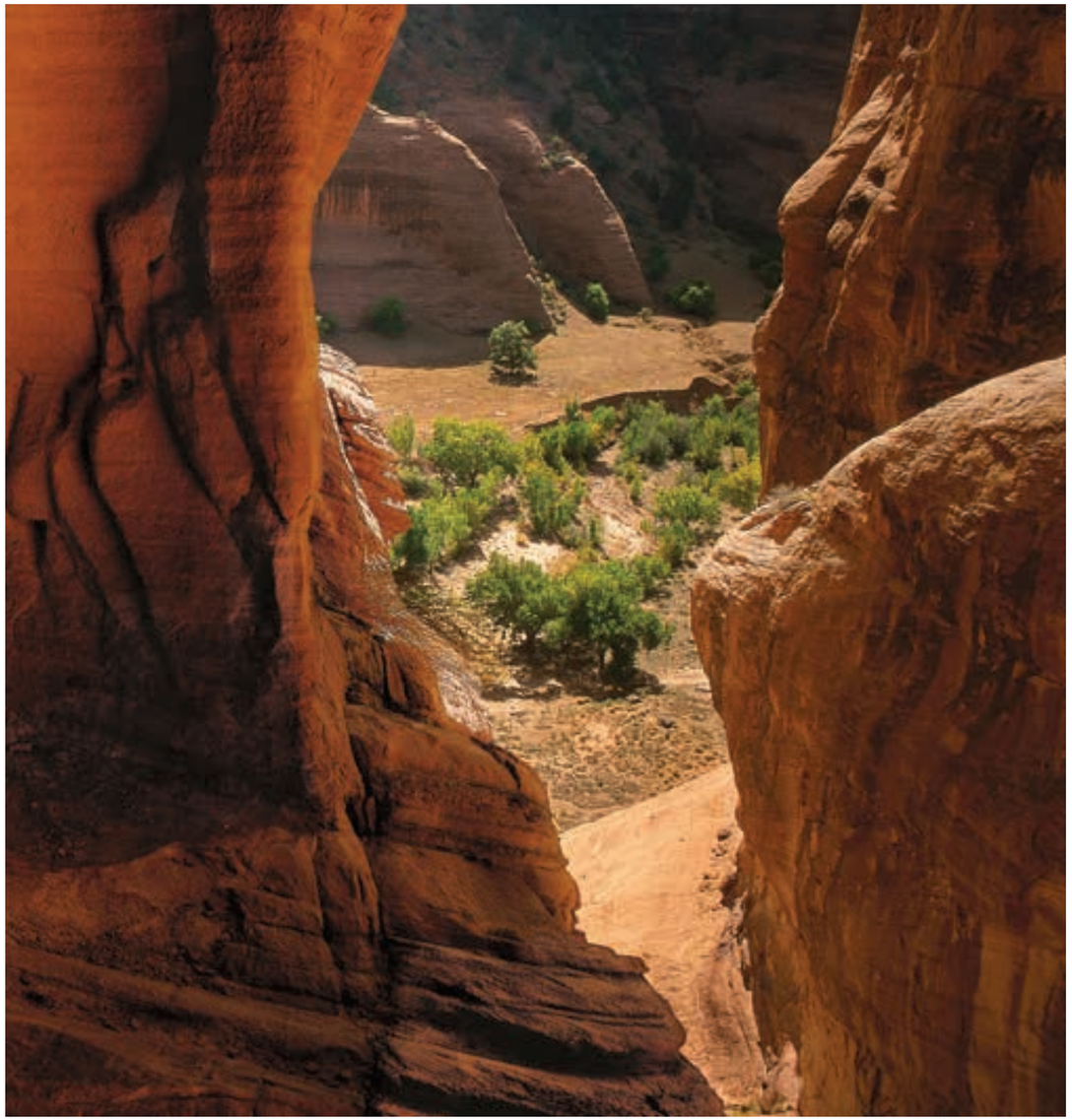
ONLINE For more hikes in Arizona, visit our "Hiking Guide" at arizonahighways.com.

where is this?

Inner Passage

PHOTOGRAPH BY LARRY LINDAHL

With more than 800 archaeological sites, this location is Arizona's Egypt. One philosopher compared its antiquarian ambience to that of the Nile Valley, while another heralded it as the most sacred place on Earth. The area is rife with mythology, and though you won't find sphinxes, there is talk of Spider Woman. Unfortunately, this gorgeous setting's past is blotted with massacre, imprisonment and famine. Still, its people live on today, continuing 2,000 years of rich history.



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November 2008 Answer: The Weatherford Trail. Congratulations to our winner, Jersy DePonty of Tempe.